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POLICE AFFAIR.

Bolt-court, 8. August, 1833.

On Tuesday last the select committee, and I, endeavoured to lay the names of the officers before the court, succeeded by the following report.

“Resolved—That it is the opinion of this committee, that the conduct of the policeman, Popay, has been highly reprehensible, inasmuch as he appears to have taken an active personal part in the proceedings which his duty only required him to observe, and to have carried concealment and deceit into the intercourse of private life; and, although the committee are inclined to hope that he was not influenced by any malignity of disposition, but by a mistaken view of his instructions, and a misjudging zeal in the execution of them, they cannot forbear to mark his course of behaviour with their most grave and decided censure.

“2. Resolved—That it is the opinion of this committee, that while it cannot be supposed that authority was given for the foregoing conduct, there is reason to apprehend that sufficient caution was not always exercised by those to whom Popay's reports were submitted, in checking the occasional diffuseness of their contents, and in warning him against having recourse to undue means for supplying them.

“3. Resolved—That it is the opinion of this committee, that with respect to the occasional employment of policemen in plain clothes, the system, as laid down by the heads of the police department, affords no just mat-

ter of complaint, while strictly confined to detect breaches of the law, and to prevent breaches of the peace, should these ends appear otherwise unattainable: at the same time the committee would strongly urge the most cautious maintenance of those limits, and solemnly deprecate any approach to the employment of spies in the ordinary acceptance of the term, as a practice most abhorrent to the feelings of the people, and most alien to the spirit of the constitution.”

This was approved of by a majority of the committee, I being in the minority, though I gave full credit to the majority for the goodness of their motives, and though I could not but applaud their fair treatment of me and the petitioners, and their strict impartiality from the beginning to the end of our proceedings, I thought the report wholly insufficient to characterize the abominable system which our inquiries had brought to light.

It has been erroneously stated in the newspapers, that the report was brought up *by me*. Mr. Alderman Wood was the chairman, and, therefore, he brought up the report; and I must take this opportunity of saying, that he discharged his part of the duty imposed upon us with extraordinary diligence and care, and with that unflinching adherence to right-doing which I have known to mark his conduct for now pretty nearly thirty years. When the report was presented to the House, I rose with an intention to state, that I did not approve of that report, thinking it insufficient; that I myself (having been the person to present the petition and to move for the committee) had prepared a report and submitted it to the committee; that that report had not been agreed to by the majority; that the report which I had prepared divided the petition into eighteen distinct allegations, and brought, under each, the evidence upon which it was supported; that my report was a summing up of the evidence, so to

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to save the House the trouble of wading through the volume; and that it concluded with a bird's-eye view of the whole of the horrible transactions, and tendered to the House our opinion of the inevitable tendency of such a system, leaving it to the House to discover and to adopt an effectual remedy. It was my intention to state this to the House when the report was brought up; but it was urged, that it was not proper to enter into a discussion on the subject, until the evidence should be printed and in the hands of the members. I was, therefore, obliged to give way. On Wednesday (yesterday) I had petitions to present from NEWCASTLE and from Nottingham against the spy-system, which had been brought to light by the petition on which this committee was founded. These two petitions, together with one from Edinburgh, I had kept back, because the committee had been appointed before I received them, and I thought it would be more agreeable to the petitioners, that their complaints should come after the confirmation of the truth of the petition from Camberwell and Walworth. The two petitions which I carried to the House yesterday were in language, as well as in sentiment, and argument, two papers as admirable as any that ever fell into my hands; that from EDINBURGH, which I received about the same time, being deposited where I could not get at it yesterday, was not presented; if it had, it would have been a suitable companion for the other two; and, let any other country in the world find me three towns capable of producing three such papers as these; but, the readers will say, you must find first some other country that contains three such towns.

I began to read the petition from NEWCASTLE, without intending to utter a word in the way of speech; but that paragraph so justly, so fully, so eloquently, so forcibly described the vile acts developed in the evidence before our committee, that I really felt myself impelled to stop and to say then, something of which I should have said upon the bringing up of the report. There then took place that of which the

public has seen a pretty tolerable report in the newspapers, especially in the *Morning Chronicle* I think; and, indeed, in the *Morning Herald*, and the *Times*, I having as yet seen no other paper. I am seldom very anxious on the score of reports of what I say; but there is an error here which it is right that I should correct. The *Morning Chronicle* makes me say, "that I took copies of the reports of Popay." I said no such thing. I said that I took them home and read them with great care, as it was my duty to do; I said, that these reports made by the spy to the Government, formed a *part of the evidence laid before us*, and that I should have been very unworthy of the share of trust reposed in me by the House, if I had not made myself wholly acquainted with that evidence; that I did take them home openly and with the knowledge of the chairman, and with the knowledge of the clerk; that I *numbered them*, and that I returned them safe into the hands of the chairman accompanied with an INDEX, which I had been at the trouble of making out for the convenience of other members of the committee, the reports consisting of about a hundred and seventy folio pages of manuscript in POPAY's hand-writing. I further said, that these writings were, in fact, *evidence produced before the committee*; that it was from these reports that facts stated in the evidence came out; and that I had proposed that we should subjoin the reports in an appendix to the minutes of the evidence, conformably to the invariable usage of select committees receiving such documents.

It was necessary to explain this matter, lest the public should believe, that I had come at any information in a clandestine manner. It is very true, that I have laboured with more zeal and activity in this case, than, perhaps, I should have done, had I not entertained a very powerful prejudice against this police establishment, and against every establishment of its kind. This is very likely; but this cannot invalidate any fact that has been brought forth. Why, Mr. Alderman Wood has always been

friend of this police establishment; but I can bear him witness, that that did not slacken his zeal in this case, and his desire to come at the truth, and to do justice. In availing myself of the opportunity when I presented the petitions, I could not help bearing in mind, that *the session might end without giving me another opportunity!* There is nothing that can be done now about the report of our committee, without a motion, and that motion preceded by a notice, and that notice standing at the bottom, perhaps, of seven or eight, and those seven or eight standing at the bottom of thirty orders of the day! In short, it would have been madness to entertain the hope of being able to bring on a regular discussion, overlaid and smothered as we are by proceedings of all sorts. So that the accusation against me of making an *ex parte* statement, was, certainly, not well founded. This is all that I shall say upon the matter at present, though there will be a good deal to say of it when once the evidence has been printed and submitted to the members of the House, who, I am sure, when they have had time to reflect, will be convinced that this system must be put an end to. The facts brought to light of the proceedings of this spy really chills one's blood. If the minutes of the evidence and the report be delivered to us in the house, in time, I shall publish in the *Register*, next week, a summing up of that evidence; public good, public duty, and particularly justice to the petitioners at CAMBERWELL and WALORTH, demand this at my hands.

Wm. COBBETT.

P.S. The petition from EDINBURGH is from the *working classes* of that fine city, in public meeting assembled. They pray, that a full inquiry may be made into the complaints of their brethren of CAMBERWELL and WALORTH. Thus, from the banks of the TAME to the banks of the泰晤士, is this spy upon working people become famous. The inquiry has taken place: we have anticipated the prayer of these sensible and spirited working

people of EDINBURGH; but there are other things that they suggest, which makes the petition worthy the particular attention of the House.

POOR-LAW PROJECT.

This subject is by no means wholly unconnected with the police affair. The matter contained in the book which, under the names of the Bishop of LONDON and Bishop of CHESTER, STURGES BOURNE, HARRY GAWLER, SENIOR, COLSTON, and another: the book laid before the House of Commons under these names, has been remarked upon by me before. The main object in view has been, under pretence of improving the poor-laws, to introduce a villainous thing called a POLICE into all parts of England and Scotland; to set aside the present justices of the peace and all parochial peace officers; to supplant the former by hired magistrates; and the latter by the amiable and faithful comrades of POPAY; or rather, by recruits extending the already four thousand to a hundred thousand men, at the least. Our ears have been dinned by the words "*rural police.*" "*A rural police!*" "*A rural police*" has been the cry every time that we have heard of the burning of a stack! Some in uniform, of course; the rest *à la Popay*; and ROWANS and MAYNES and M'LEANS to receive and read the *reports* sent in by the POPAYS. It is as clear as daylight that this poor-law commission had this principally in view. To have contemplated such a thing is little short of madness. How soon the oak-saplings and the ground-ash would have rattled about the skulls of the POPAYS!

The itinerant poor-law commissioners, who were sent about the country to collect matter for the contemplated "improvement of the age," had amongst them a fellow of the name of OKEDEN. Part of the business was to decry the present magistrates, in order that it might appear that hired magistrates were necessary. This was imprudent,

as well as impudent: the feelosofers overshot their mark here; and they have met, from one of the present magistrates in particular, with a rebuff that they will not easily recover. This magistrate is a MR. YEATMAN, a clergyman of Dorsetshire, whose answer to the feelosofers I published before. The feelosofe *Okeden* has answered him, and Mr. YEATMAN, the magistrate, now publishes his reply. Thus we have, then, the book of the poor-law-projectors, the commentary of Mr. YEATMAN on that part of the book which applies to a district in Dorsetshire; we have *Okeden's* answer, and we have Mr. YEATMAN's reply; the latter leaving the Malthusian feelosofer no hole to creep out of. I request my readers now to go attentively through the whole of these papers. It is a subject of infinite importance. The scheme, if it had been acted upon, must have plunged the whole country into confusion. If it could have succeeded, it would have made Englishmen a set of sulky and gloomy slaves; but it never could have succeeded: the "*rural police*" would have been knocked on the head like so many dogs, and the country would have been such that no gentleman could have lived in it. Nothing would have remained of it but its name: local judges and a police establishment must have produced open and general resistance in a very short time. But, now, what is to become of this poor-law commission; and who is to *pay for it*; and when is it to end? Are we to be taxed all our lives to maintain these fellows? They were to have been *commissaires de police*, I suppose? I imagine, that their project is now blown into air; it must have been conceived in some half-mad and half-drunken skull, in which the madness and drunkenness were mixed up with a suitable quantity of malignity. At any rate, it becomes us still to watch it. To watch it with effect we must first understand it. To understand it we must read about it; and the whole subject is pretty well brought before us by the three articles which I here subjoin, which I again request my readers to go

through with attention; and I again express my thanks to Mr. YEATMAN for the share which he has taken in the blowing up of this wretched scheme; for, though it never could have succeeded, the attempt might have produced mischief enormous.

An Inquiry into the Merits of the Poor-Law Report of D. O. P. Okeden, Esq., Assistant Commissioner; by the Rev. HARRY FARR YEATMAN, LL.B., acting Magistrate for Dorset and Somerset.

In perusing a document of so much importance as that of a "*report as to the administration of the poor-laws*," by commissioners appointed by the crown, the general reader will naturally expect to find that such a report is founded upon evidence of the most impartial and conclusive description, and that such evidence has been taken by the commissioners of each district in a manner the most open, circumstantial, and direct. It will be expected that this should be the case, for the purpose of showing the "*most correct views on the working of the poor laws generally*," and as a system; the central commissioners having been (according to the instructions of Lord Melbourne), "*directed by his Majesty's commission to make a diligent and full inquiry into the practical operation of the laws for the relief of the poor in England and Wales, and into the manner in which those laws are administered*, and to report whether any and what alterations, amendments, or improvements, may be beneficially made in the said laws," &c. &c.; but it will be the more especially expected that the evidence on which the reports are framed should be taken in the open and candid manner above alluded to, if it should turn out that the character of the justices of any one single division, or of any one county, has been reflected upon in those reports, and that judicial inquiry on the part of the district, or the assistant commissioner, shall have led the way to judicial condemnation.

In perusing the poor-law report, addressed by D. O. P. Okeden, Esq., on the 25. of December, 1832, to his Majesty's commissioners, in his capacity as an assistant commissioner duly appointed to "*inquire into the practical operation of the poor-law system*," in this county, and which report has been "*published by authority*," and referring to that particular part of it which relates to the county of Dorset, and to the Sturminster Newton division of it in particular, in which I have had the honour to act as a magistrate for the period of full twenty years, I am forcibly and most painfully impressed with the opinion,

first, that the *manner* in which Mr. Okeden was pleased to collect the evidence, on which his report, touching the working of the poor-law system in the Sturminster Newton division is founded, was *neither so open and accessible to the parties concerned and affected by that report as it ought to have been*; secondly, that the evidence so taken by him is *utterly insufficient for the purpose of showing the PRACTICAL OPERATION* of the existing poor-law system within the aforesaid division generally, and which "*practical operation*" ought to have been shown by a careful comparison of parish with parish, and by sifting the system as a whole, from which some general inference might be drawn, touching the nature of that system; and not by selecting and commenting upon a few parishes in particular, carefully and studiously chosen for the purpose, as it should seem, of illustrating the peculiar views and opinions which Mr. Okeden is well known to entertain upon this important question, and which ought to have been illustrated by an analysis of the effect produced by the administration of the justices thrown over the whole surface of this division at large. In confirmation of the truth of these statements, I beg to observe that, on the day when Mr. Okeden attended the petty sessions at Sturminster, for the purpose of collecting such evidence as he might require from the overseers of every parish (all of whom were summoned by myself or colleagues to give such evidence as might be required by Mr. Okeden), that gentleman arrived at, and entered the room where a certain number of the justices, including myself, were then assembled in petty sessions; and that, after the interchange of a few words, he retired to a *private room*, as being more convenient both to him and to ourselves, and that he there collected such information as he thought proper to require, except that, in so far as the parish of Sturminster Newton was concerned, he asked, at our request, a certain number of questions from the overseers of that "*ill-regulated parish*," concerning the injudicious mode of payment to, and non-employment of, single men, and recorded the answers thereto in our immediate presence. But I beg to observe, that the evidence on which the report of Mr. Okeden was framed, and on which, as it turns out, the magistrates of the whole division have been blamed and censured by Mr. Okeden, was received and recorded in a *private room*, into which room the justices were not invited to enter, though at this very time they were sitting under the same roof in petty session assembled: with the nature of which evidence, of the charges against them founded thereon, they were never made acquainted in any manner whatever, either directly or indirectly, till they saw the report, and censures on their conduct founded thereon, "*published by authority*," and circulating throughout the kingdom. Received too, as that evidence appears to have been, by some few individuals who were personally interested in the matter,

from persons who were opposed to and dissatisfied with the orders, directions, and general practice of those magistrates; and who did, either designedly or incidentally, in the course of inquiry before Okeden, prefer a formal complaint, and a serious charge against the legal practice of those justices to which it did not appear expedient to Mr. Okeden to permit those justices to have any opportunity whatever of making their defence; upon which evidence, so taken, so recorded, unexplained, *ex parte*, and unexamined on both sides, as it undoubtedly was, and as it ought not to have been, Mr. Okeden has thought proper to affix a certain degree of censure upon the conduct of those justices, and to permit the declaration of it to be published to the whole world. As a gentleman who is in the habit of frequenting the courts of justice in this county, and occasionally presiding in a criminal court himself, I would here beg leave to ask of Mr. Okeden, whether the practice of the judges of this land, or of the magistrates of this kingdom, when sitting on the *beuch*, is, or is not, in accordance with the practice adopted by him towards the justices of the Sturminster division, on the 29. of October last; and whether it is, or is not usual to allow persons accused, first, to know the nature of the charges which are about to be, or have been preferred against them; and secondly, whether it is not usual, as well as just, to allow such persons, in the face of their accusers, to enjoy the right and privilege of replying to those charges, and of cross-examining the evidence on which those charges have been preferred; and if Mr. Okeden's reply is likely to be, *as it must be*, in the affirmative, and in favour of their practice, I beg leave respectfully to ask him, why he departed from that principle on the day when he received from the overseers of Hasisbury and Sturminster Newton, the evidence which appeared to him to be sufficient to accuse the justices of the Sturminster division of a maladministration of the poor-laws, and of having, in a "*singular*" manner, thwarted the rector of Hasisbury Bryan, in his efforts to put down that system of maladministration on their part. On the authority of this fact, affirmatively taken, I feel that I have a right to consider that myself and brother justices have been *condemned unheard*, and that too, in a manner the most repugnant to our notions of common justice, as founded upon the practice of our common courts, both of equity and law; assuming for the moment, and admitting, though only for the purposes of argument, that the evidence so taken from our accusers and calumniators was even perfectly correct, founded on fact, and incapable of contradiction. Having thus alluded to the *manner* in which the evidence was, in reality, taken by Mr. Okeden, wherein his report of the poor-law commissioners is founded, I now proceed to examine the *nature* of that evidence, so far as the same can be inferred from the substance of the report itself. The first parish which is named by Mr. Okeden, is that of the parish of

Cranbourne; but as that parish happens to be remote and distinct from the division of Sturminster Newton, and is one for the poor law administration of which I am not personally responsible, I shall pass on to the consideration of the next named parish, merely observing, that Mr. Okeden's report on the moral condition of Cranbourne is remarkable for the most extraordinary allusion to the presumed irregularity of practice on the part of a magistrate of that division **LATELY DECEASED**, venturing to think at the same time, that, although the living are subjected, in this report, to the visitations of his dispraise, yet that it might have been as well to exonerate the dead from the searching severities of his censure.

After making certain observations on the past and present condition of Cranbourne, Mr. Okeden next directs his attention to the parish of Hasilbury Bryan, of which parish we are presented with the following graphic description.

| HASILBURY BRYAN, DORSET, POPULATION 611. | |
|---|--------------|
| Number of acres in the parish. | |
| Pasture land | 2,020 |
| Arable ditto | 250 |
| Woodland ditto | 27 |
| Common ditto | 150 |
| Garden ditto | 7 |
| Total acres..... | 2,454 |

"Expended on the poor, as per book, for one year, to Ladyday, 1832. 413*l.*"

"There are 77 agricultural labourers. In the summer none are out of employ; in the winter not above five or six are unemployed. These are put on the roads, or, if family men, relieved by the scale as settled at the petty sessions at Sturminster Newton. In short, the scale system and the making up of wages are complete. There is no workhouse, but there are eight cottages belonging to the parish, in which there are fourteen families lodged. Soon after the riots of 1830, a new and more liberal scale was made by the magistrates of the division, and in February, 1831, an order was given to the overseers of Hasilbury Bryan, requiring them to relieve ten families, all able-bodied and in employ, by the new scale. The overseers contended, and the clergyman protested, against this order in vain." Now it would be supposed by an indifferent observer, and by a person not locally acquainted with the parish of Hasilbury, from the perusal of the above extract from Mr. Okeden's report, first, that the parish of Hasilbury was reduced, by the misadministration of the justices of this division, to the extremity of poverty and moral degradation, and that the parochial poor-rate was increasing year after year to a most fearful and insupportable amount, threatening to absorb all the visible property of the parish, and to destroy every existing principle of independence, as well as

all physical energy on the part of the labouring paupers of this parish. Secondly, that the said justices had interpreted and administered the poor laws of the realm in a manner both widely and glaringly different from that of any other justices of the county, or even of the kingdom. Before I proceed, however, to the investigation of this part of the subject, I am compelled most reluctantly to protest against the accuracy or veracity of the statement which Mr. Okeden has made, touching the expenditure of the parish of Hasilbury for the year 1832. By referring to the poor-book of this parish (which it is presumed Mr. Okeden cannot have looked at!) I find that the expenditure of the poor for one year to Ladyday, 1832, is not 413*l.* as stated by Mr. Okeden, but 330*l.* 10*s.* (2*l.* 12*s.* having been disallowed by myself and brother justices in virtue of the 50th Geo. III. c. 49, and deducted from the gross charge made by the overseers of 333*l.* 2*s.* for that year); being just 82*l.* 10*s.* less than the amount quoted by Mr. Okeden, that gentleman having confounded the expenditure of the year 1831 with that of the year succeeding it! But even of this sum, no less than 49*l.* 10*s.* 10*d.* is to be deducted for county rates and mole catching, and which, deducted from 330*l.* for the year 1832, makes the actual expenditure on the poor to be the sum of 280*l.* 19*s.* 2*d.* and this too upon a population of 611!! I would also observe, that by referring to the book for the whole period of three years (during which time only we have presided over the parish of Hasilbury as justices), and not judging, as Mr. Okeden has done, from the gross account of one year only, selecting at the same time the highest amount of expenditure that he could find, including county rates and charges for mole catching, and calling the whole as he has also done "expenditure on the poor!" I say, that by referring to the Hasilbury poor-book, and looking at the sums total as sworn to by the overseers during the three years last past, I find that the expenditure is gross on the part of the Hasilbury overseers stands precisely as follows;

| 1830 and 1831 total expenses of £. s. d. | |
|--|----------|
| overseers | 413 10 2 |
| 1831 and 1832 ditto ditto | 330 10 0 |
| 1832 and 1833 ditto ditto | 305 8 10 |

showing, that during the last three years (for be it again remembered that Hasilbury Bryan did not belong to the Sturminster Newton division till September, 1830, it having been assigned and added to the Sturminster division by an order of quarter sessions under the sanction of 9. Geo. IV., c. 43, prior to which it formed part and parcel of the Blandford division, and was not under our control at all); showing, I say, that in the last three years, during which period, according to Mr. Okeden's report, we have so grossly and improvidently mismanaged its concerns, the poor-rates of Hasilbury have positively decreased

from the gross charge of 413*l.* 10*s.* 2*d.* extreme height, down to the sum of 305*l.* 8*s.* 10*d.* present expenditure; being a reduction of poor-rate upon the three years only to the extent of 25 per cent !!! But I shall beg leave to rate the actual decrease even still higher, by stating that during this period no less than fourteen special rates have been ordered by

the court of quarter sessions, and levied for the county lunatic asylum; and that when these and the other extraordinary items are deducted from the several years above recited, it will reduce the total expenditure on the poor in the parish of Hasilbury Bryan for the last three years, to the following proportions:—

| Date. | Gross Expenditure. | Extraor. Disbursements. | Expended on Poor. |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1830 and 1831 | £413 10 2 | £19 19 0 | £363 11 2 |
| 1831 and 1832 | 330 10 0 | 49 10 10 | 280 19 2 |
| 1832 and 1833 | 305 8 10 | 47 8 5 | 258 0 5 |

reducing the expenditure of the year ending Ladyday, 1833, to the sum, the trifling sum of £58*l.* 0*s.* 5*d.*; being, on the whole population of 611 persons, less than the sum per head of 8*s.* 6*d.*, and really less than 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound. I would also add, that if the sum of 413*l.* 10*s.* 2*d.* appears to be a sum of considerable magnitude (as contrasted with the charge of the previous years 1829 and 1830) for the expenditure of the year from Ladyday, 1830, to Ladyday, 1831, it ought to be remembered, first, that during and immediately subsequent to "the riots," it was deemed advisable by my brother justices and others, to increase the comforts of the poor, and to soothe the lower orders, excited as they were at that eventful period, by a more liberal amount of relief, and, that, during the same year, the large sum of 60*l.* was also paid for the first and only time for spade husbandry within this parish, the expenditure of which, and the ordering of which, the magistrates of the division had nothing to do with, and which proved to be, as stated to myself and colleagues, the source of serious loss to the parish, though solely from the mismanagement and negligence of those who superintended it at the time: the introduction of which system, when differently managed, as connected with the plan of allotting small pieces of land to the poor, the magistrates of this division have most warmly advocated; and for the introduction of which plan into the parish of Hasilbury they are ready to tender their best thanks to Mr. Walter.

I beg also to observe, that although the justices did in the winter of 1830, during "the riots"—and the

"Duria urgens in rebus egestas" which at that time prevailed, and which, proceeding as it did from inadequacy of wages and insufficiency of relief under the scale, drove the pauper population to madness and to overt acts of rebellion; an able-bodied man living, at this time, only 4*s.* 5*d.* and 6*s.* per week wages, and 2*s.* 1*d.* and 1*s.* 10*d.* per week relief under the scale, to support himself in food and wearing apparel of every sort and kind according to the rate of relief afforded at that period. I say, that although the justices of this division did, at that particular period,

order the overseers at Hasilbury to relieve as many as ten families, according to a more liberal and extended system of relief, yet it appears from Mr. Okeden's own statement, that, generally speaking, "in winter not above five or six are unemployed," "and relieved by the scale as settled at the petty sessions at Sturminster Newton;" and that therefore the "magisterial interference" so much complained of, and upon the exercise of which, Mr. Okeden has let down the whole weight of his heavy censure and disapprobation, must have been generally, as we shall presently find it to have been, confined to the grievances and complaints of "five or six only." But I beg to ask, how did it happen that this liberal system of parochial relief was adopted by the justices of this division at this particular period; and why was it that they left it to be their duty to make the orders of relief on the "ten families" aforesaid, to the great grievance, it seems, of the highly respectable rector and the overseer of Hasilbury Bryan? I proceed to answer these several questions, and to state at the same time, that if Mr. Okeden had informed either myself or brother justices; as he might have done, when he attended at Sturminster on the 29. of October last, that he had at that very moment received, and then possessed in his green bag a charge against the justices of that division which he intended, upon the ex parte evidence of certain persons residing at Hasilbury Bryan, to publish to the whole world; I state that if Mr. Okeden, on the day aforesaid, had in candour or justice, saying nothing of common courtesy, afforded to my brother justices and myself, an opportunity of vindicating or explaining our conduct, so far as we could do so, he would have received these several answers on the spot, and we should not have been prejudged and condemned in a public document, before we had been permitted to utter a single syllable in our defence. Be it known then, that under the excitement which prevailed from one end of the west of England to the other, "during the riots of 1830," and when the labouring population was in arms, I have reason to know that several gentlemen in this county made promises to the lower orders of future advantages and greater comforts, and of an

increase of wages ; assuring them that the same should be raised from 5s. and 6s. to the height of 10s. and 12s. per week, and which promise, I grieve to say it, now that the alarm and terror of the moment have subsided, has been broken in a manner the most treacherous and dishonourable ;—it was deemed advisable by myself, my brother justices, and others, that the “poor and impotent,” and also the able-bodied who were unable to procure employment sufficient for themselves and their helpless families, should also be admitted to a participation of the blessings of that soothing system, which, though late, and extorted from the higher orders of society by fear and terror, it was deemed expedient to adopt, at that alarming and distressing period. With this view, and at my earnest request, a special meeting of the magistrates of the neighbourhood (not of the division of Sturminster Newton, but of the whole neighbourhood), and of the eastern part of the county, was holden at Blandford, in order that they in their wisdom and good feeling might suggest a mode of tranquilizing the county, by applying to the lower orders a liberal and uniform system, both of increased wages and increased relief : my object being, that the labourers of one division should not be made uneasy and discontented by hearing of the greater amount of both prevailing and adopted in another. At this special meeting, Mr. Okeden attended—and at this meeting at Blandford it was that Mr. Okeden broached for the first time, in a formal manner, the doctrine which he has since promulgated and maintained, “that no relief whatever ought to be afforded to the able-bodied man, and that if he and his family could not subsist upon their wages, ‘they might lie down and die by the roadside,’ (these were the words of Mr. Okeden,) ‘whether the wages, so received, were or were not per head, sufficient for the support of the able-bodied father and his family.’ One justice who was present, and one justice only, assented to this extraordinary and unchristian doctrine, for such I must venture to call it ; the result of our deliberation being this : first, that although a uniform system of wages was absolutely impossible, from the fact, that in different parts of the county, from an increased or decreased demand for labour, from a greater or lesser degree of cultivation prevailing, from an excess of arable over pasture land, and from a greater or lesser degree of population, in proportion to the improved and improvable surface of the land so requiring cultivation, a higher amount of wages must exist of necessity, as compared with those parts of the country where the state of society was different ; yet that, secondly, in the opinion of the majority of the justices who were present, it was absolutely necessary that the amount of relief to the poor and impotent, and to the able-bodied who were unable to obtain for themselves and families an adequate amount of wages, should be increased from what it had been, and raised to an amount

somewhat more upon a level with the common necessities of life. But I go one step further, and I show that the principle of interference with able-bodied labourers, who are unable to support their families from the insufficient wages which they earn, against which system of “magisterial interference,” it appears that the “overseers of Hasilbury contended, that the clergyman protested in vain ;” I say that I am prepared to show that this doctrine of “magisterial interference” with an occasional relief to able-bodied men and their families when in distress, received about this identical period, the sanction of the whole court of quarter sessions in this county, and that, too, from one of the fullest and most intelligent benches of magistrates ever assembled at the county hall in solemn deliberation. On the 18. of February, 1831, at an adjourned session, holden at Wimborne, Mr. Okeden gave notice of a motion which he intended to submit to the consideration of the court, about to be assembled at the ensuing quarter sessions, to the following effect, “That it was ‘impolitic and illegal to make up the wages of able-bodied men from the poor-rate,’ and accordingly at the Easter sessions, and on the 5. of April, 1831, Mr. Okeden, after recapitulating the arguments which he had previously used at Blandford, at the special meeting of justices above referred to, and after entering into, and reciting these doctrines which he has embodied in the report which forms the subject of these strictures, concluded by pressing upon the court the motion above recited. But what was the result ! Were the justices of this county, to the amount of nearly forty, were they in favour of the opinion entertained by Mr. Okeden, and since advocated by the overseers of Sturminster, and of Hasilbury Bryan ? Were they of opinion that an able-bodied man of unblemished character, with a deserving wife and helpless children, should be allowed to “lie down and die by the roadside,” or drag on a life of wretchedness and want, to which the felons in our county jail cannot be exposed without a violation of the existing law ?—No !—Mr. Okeden’s statements or arguments were triumphantly replied to, and Mr. Okeden himself begged permission to withdraw his own motion ; thereby from necessity, if not from conviction, according to the very doctrine which the magistrates of the whole county maintained in opposition to him, and for acting up to which, Mr. Okeden has seized the present mode, and availed himself of the present opportunity, on exparte and inconclusive evidence, of censuring—not the the justices of the whole county of Dorset, who maintained that doctrine after a solemn argument, according to notice given by Mr. Okeden himself, and in opposition to that gentleman—but the justices of the Sturminster Newton division, who simply acted in conformity with the same. I would also ask of Mr. Okeden whether it occurred to him to demand of those, who, on the day aforesaid, dropped into the lion’s

mouth at Sturminster Newton, their charges and complaints against the justices of that division, first, whether the orders which were made upon these ten families, were made for a longer period than "one month," (under the 59. G. 3, c. 12); — secondly, whether these orders were renewed; and thirdly, what was the amount of the money expended and paid by the overseers of Hasilbury, in virtue of and under the pressure of those orders, by the amount of which alone, could they have been aggrieved, affirming as I do, that if Mr. Okeden did not ask these questions and record the answers thereto, he was guilty of negligence towards the parish of Hasilbury; and that if he did, and obtained the answers to the same, he ought, in justice to the magistrates of this calumniated division, to have published the result of those answers, for the purpose of showing the extent of the evil which he and the highly respectable clergyman and overseer of Hasilbury complained of on the one hand, and the amount of money which, according to their views of the case, they had been, in virtue of those orders, unjustly mulcted of on the other. What Mr. Okeden has not done, either in justice to the parish of Hasilbury or to the magistrates of this division, I now beg leave to do in fairness towards both. I state, first, that on the 7. of February, 1831, orders of relief were made, in the usual form, by the justices of this division, on ten persons, labourers with families, belonging to Hasilbury Bryan: but these orders were made for the space of "one month only, to meet the exigencies of the then existing crisis, in pursuance of the statute aforesaid, immediately subsequent to the agricultural riots which convulsed this very, and immediate part of the country: and which orders (with one or two exceptions only) were never renewed by us. I would also submit to any one conversant with the duties of magistrates (Mr. Okeden and the highly respectable clergymen and overseers of Hasilbury excepted) whether in their opinion, the period of these "riots" was the time, above all others, to withhold relief from these ten men, and whether, if we had done so, and a tumult had ensued, we should have been considered by my Lord Melbourne, by the lord-lieutenant of this county, and the public at large, as acting up to our duty of conservators of the public peace? But Mr. Okeden has stated that these men were "all able-bodied," and in "employ." In reply to which, I beg to say, that the ten persons on whom we made orders of relief on the 7. of February, 1831, were named as follows, "Jonathan Paddock, John Crocker, Stephen Spicer, Robert Frizzle, Mary Granger, Samuel Muston, John Lush, Robert Caines, Thomas Rolls, and William House," and that by referring to the poor-book of Hasilbury for the year 1831, (and which book it is certain that Mr. Okeden could not have looked at when he made this charge against the justices of this division, although by referring to the instruc-

tions which he received as assistant commissioner, I find that "the inspection of parish books, and other vouchers," is a duty most especially recommended to every one who fills that judicial and very responsible office); and looking at the entries of the 6. of February, the day immediately preceding that one, on which the orders of relief, for the time to come, were made on the ten persons and their families, I find that several sums are entered as paid on that day, in the following manner:

John Crocker
John Lush
Thomas Rolls

No Work!

Proving that the above ten persons were not "all employed" on the day preceding the date of these orders of relief; Mary Granger, a woman with five children, and the three men above-mentioned, being evidently in a different situation; and as to the whole being "able-bodied," it is equally clear that, as many of these persons had children, some of whom (by referring to my notes taken at the time), I find to have been under five years of age, and therefore "imotent and unable to work." According to the strictest interpretation of the statute of Elizabeth, these children, being objects of relief under these orders, equally with the men, who were their parents, and named in those orders, it is clear that the objects of relief under these orders cannot and ought not to be spoken of and described as being "all able-bodied." I also declare, with a view of supplying the deficiency in the evidence which Mr. Okeden, with the parish-book of Hasilbury before him, did not choose, or think it worth while, or any part of his duty to supply, first, that upon the ten persons above-named, upon whom orders of relief were made, on the 7. of February aforesaid, and who with their children amounted to no less than 64 persons, it appears that the two overseers of Hasilbury expended during the single month for which time our orders were binding, the sum of £1. 13s. 6d. and no more; four persons also out of the above having been ill during the said month, (therefore not "able-bodied," as asserted by Mr. Okeden), and which sum, when divided among the 64 persons, who were included in, and the objects of our order, amounts to about one shilling and nine pence per head on an average for the time being, and no more; for granting which, and that too, during the time of riot, excitement, and public distress, the justices of this division are censured by Mr. Okeden, "protested against by the clergymen, and contended against by the overseers" of the parish of Hasilbury Bryan. But I beg also to say, on the authority of the printed instructions, page 417, "that it is the duty of the assistant commissioner to endeavour to ascertain the time at which the relief of the able-bodied originated in any parish; whether it is increasing, stationary, or diminishing, or has ceased; and the causes, and results of its

"origin, increase, continuance, diminution, "termination," &c.; and I therefore ask, whether Mr. Okeden can gain credit from any one for having acted up to these instructions in the case before us. Mr. Okeden must have known "the cause" which induced us to make "the new and more liberal scale" (as he terms it) of the year 1830, because he has indirectly stated it: but Mr. Okeden ought also to have known that having answered its temporary object, that amount of relief and allowance had been reduced: and I beg to ask in the most pointed manner, why this fact is suppressed by Mr. Okeden, and not even glanced at most remotely in his report to Lord Melbourne? If he had admitted us behind the scenes in the private room at Sturminster, or had examined persons who were willing or competent to give fair and impartial information, Mr. Okeden would have found that whereas in the year 1831, "soon after the riots," we deemed the sum of 7s. 4d. for a man and his wife and one child of tender years, to be no more than sufficient under the peculiar circumstances of the time, bread being at 8d. and 8½d. per loaf; yet that in the year 1832, and down to this period also, we deemed and still deem the sum of 5s. 9d. to be sufficient for the same number of persons, bread being at 6d.; and that from the decrease in the price of other articles of consumption, &c., from increased exertions, on the part of landlord and tenant to find employment for paupers, and from the progress of the allotment system, which we have advocated to the utmost of our power; for these and for other reasons, we have universally reduced the amount of relief in all cases, and that so far from any ill effect being produced by this reduction, I find, not only that the labouring poor throughout the division (with the exception of the town and parish of Sturminster Newton) are perfectly contented, but that even in the parish of Hasilbury, there is not on this very day a single able-bodied pauper out of employ, and that the first month's payment for the year, on the part of the newly-appointed overseers, amounts to the trifling sum of 5s. 14s. for a population of 611 persons. Why Mr. Okeden, therefore, on the 25. December, 1832, did not endeavour to learn the amount of the expenditure for the three-quarters of the parochial year then expired; why he did not fairly and candidly state the amount of the yearly decrease of that expenditure under our system of "magisterial interference;" and why Mr. Okeden did not assign the existing cause of the "new and more liberal scale" during the period of the riots; and why he did not fairly state the true and exact amount of its pressure on the parish of Hasilbury, especially the amount of that pressure produced by the orders of relief on the "ten able-bodied persons" (assuming them to have been such); and why he did not candidly state at the same time the cause and duration of these extraordinary orders for relief, and the effect produced by our system on

the existing character of its inhabitants, (none of whom, and as I believe, in consequence of our protection and interference in extreme cases, have been committed for any crime, one man excepted, for stealing an hurdle from Mr. Walter,) as well as the gradual abandonment in our part, of this obnoxious part of our practice; and lastly, the gradual and complete employment of the whole labouring population of Hasilbury Bryan, these are questions which I feel it to be my duty to ask, leaving Mr. Okeden to assign, if he can, a reasonable cause for his overlooking them as he has done. But I beg also to state that not only by the magistrates of this county, I may say by the magistrates of this whole kingdom, is the doctrine of "magisterial interference," in favour of able-bodied labourers in extreme cases of distress, and when adequate wages cannot be obtained for the support of themselves and their families, both adopted and acted upon generally, I ask permission to show that by the legislature itself, and by the Court of King's Bench, when appealed to on this principle, it is the same doctrine of "magisterial interference," in behalf of the poor inhabitants of every parish, either indirectly encouraged or positively sanctioned. It cannot be denied that the legislature of this kingdom, through the medium of its peers and commoners, who are magistrates of the realm, is acquainted with the manner in which the poor-laws have been diverted from their original purpose, and is cognizant of the shifts and expedients to which the justices of England have been reduced, in order to make the antiquated and imperfect statutes of an earlier and very ancient period accommodate themselves to the existence and pressure of circumstances, of a modern and unlooked-for growth; and which the framers of the statute of Elizabeth, and the framers of the subsequent statutes down to the 3. William and Mary, chap. 11, and the 9. Geo. I, chap. 7; did not and could not have contemplated. It is admitted by all who have spoken or written on this subject, that the present departure (for a departure there has been) from the original spirit and strict letter of the poor-laws took place only about the period of the late war. It is an evil, therefore, of modern growth; and it is an evil to which the attention of Parliament has been continually directed; and yet, although Whig and Tory Ministers have alternately presided over the helm of government, and although the members of both Houses of Parliament, being acting justices themselves, and therefore aiding and abetting the very system complained of—must have been acquainted with the existence of this practice, no one single statute has been passed with a view of putting down this evil, of putting an end to the practice of relieving, under certain circumstances, able-bodied paupers unable to find employment at adequate wages, or of declaring it illegal! On the contrary I maintain and affirm that both the legislature of this country, and the Court of King's Bench as evinced in the memorable case of

the King versus Collet, where the question touching the legality of granting relief to able-bodied paupers was evidently evaded by that court; and what is more, the acquiescence of persons themselves, who feel themselves aggrieved, by refusing as they have done (and as the overseers of Hasilbury did, on the 7 February, 1831)—though most distinctly told by myself and brother justices, that we were ready to meet them in that court, in order to have the question settled both at once and for ever), to enter the Court of King's Bench, with a view of bringing the legal consideration of this question before the final adjudication of the judges of the land; I affirm that all collectively have conspired to give a colour and a credit to the propriety of this practice, and have clothed the exercise of it with all the sanctity of long usage. It is perfectly true, that the Parliamentary committee on the poor-laws, just previous to the dissolution of the late Parliament, resolved, that it was expedient, that the opinion of the judges should be taken on the following questions:

1. Does the 43. of Elizabeth, chap. 2, or any other law, authorise magistrates to order any relief to be given to poor persons who are able to work, or to afford them any assistance, except by procuring some employment for them where employment can be obtained?

2. If it be satisfactorily proved that employment cannot be procured within a reasonable distance of the parish to which able-bodied poor belong, will the magistrates in such case be authorised to order relief?

3. Where able-bodied poor persons maintain only a part of their family by the wages of their labour, are magistrates authorised to order any relief to be given to them for the maintenance of such of their children, not being able to work, as they cannot maintain? And which the abrupt prorogation and subsequent dissolution of that Parliament alone prevented from being carried into effect. The very fact, however, of doubts being entertained upon this subject, by a parliamentary committee, sitting upon the question of the poor-laws, and the very fact of this branch of the legislature requiring the aid and advice of the judges of the land, in order to enable them to prove whether the granting relief to able-bodied men, under extreme circumstances of distress and non-employment, was legal or illegal, shows of itself, first, that the statute law on this subject is not as clear, at all events touching the "illegality," of the practice, as Mr. Okeden endeavoured to prevail upon the court of quarter sessions, of this country, to think was the case, on the 5. of April, 1830; and that, therefore, till these doubts are cleared up, and till the opinion of the judges is delivered, these statutes ought to be interpreted in favour of the subject, and in favour of the poor, for whose advantage they were passed. As long, however, as the 36. & 3. c. 23., and the 55. & 3. c. 137., are in existence, declaring it to be "lawful for any justice or justices of the peace to direct and order collection and re-

" lief to be paid to any industrious poor person "or persons at his, her, or their home or "homes, house or houses, under certain cir- "cumstances of temporary illness;" and as long as the 59. & 3. c. 12 and 15., which statute enables two justices, under certain circum- "stance, on complaint of the want of adequate relief, by or on the behalf of any "poor inhab- "itant," (not of the "lame, impotent, old, "blind, and such other among them being "poor and not able to work," as recited in and limited by the statute of 43. Eliz. chap. 2.) but generally, on the behalf of any "poor inhab- "itant,"—I say, that as long as justices are empowered by this statute, as well "to make "an order under their hands and seals for "such relief as they in their just and proper "discretion shall think necessary, reference "being had by such justices as the character "and conduct of the applicant," so long shall I for one consider that there has been a virtual departure from the letter and spirit of the 43. Elizabeth, chap. 2.; and so long shall I consider that the statutes have been enlarged, with a view of meeting the exigencies of the present time, and the difficulties and distresses of the "poor inhabitants" of every parish within the counties of England.—I now proceed to address myself to the consideration of Mr. Okeden's concluding observations upon the parish of Hasilbury Bryan, and which stand thus in his report: "Mr. Walter deter- "mined, in the year 1823, to put an end to "the illegal system of roundsmen, or stem- "men, and he appealed to the Dorsetshire "July quarter sessions against the rate made "for that purpose." "I fear Mr. Walter's "appeal in 1823, did not conciliate *the mag-* "istrates; and certain it is, that in some "remarkable cases the bench of the division "have done all in their power to counteract "Mr. Walter's efforts." Now I ask, in the first place, who are "*the magistrates*" who are, *by implication*, accused by Mr. Okeden of being actuated by a spirit of vindictive feeling towards the highly respectable rector of this parish? In the year 1823, the parish of Hasilbury was part and parcel of the division of Blandford, and was therefore against the adjudication and allowance of the rate sanctioned by the honourable magistrate's of the Blandford division, and not against any judicial acts of the justices of the Sturminster division, that Mr. Walter's appeal was made. To the honourable and most highly respected justices of the Blandford division, they, as to the persons who are made the objects of this uncharitable insinuation of Mr. Okeden's, I leave the task of replying to this most odious charge. I content myself with declaring, that, in the year 1823, three out of the seven magistrates who now act for the Sturminster division, were not at that time in the commission of the peace; at all events that they did not at that period act as justices of this division; and that therefore, they, presuming for a moment that they could be vile enough to be influenced by any personal feelings of any kind, in the dis-

charge of their judicial functions, could not have been influenced by *possibility* in any matter or thing where Mr. Walter has been concerned. Nor do I believe that "the bench" ever came in contact with or had any opportunity of "thwarting" the rector of Hasilbury Bryan, except when, on *two occasions*, he attended the petty sessions for the purpose of promulgating doctrines of non-interference in cases of parochial relief, which the justices of the division did not deem it expedient to accede to—thinking that the control of the overseers, and the power of granting relief to paupers out of employ, ought not to be surrendered by them to any one, however respectable he might be in his individual capacity. As Mr. Okeden, however, has stated that "*in some remarkable cases*," the bench of the division have done all in their power to counteract Mr. Walter's efforts, I here beg leave, not merely in my own name, but in the name of the whole bench, to demand from Mr. Okeden a distinct enumeration and explanation of these "*remarkable cases*," requiring at the same time the name of the individual on whose statements he has thus presumed to impugn our magisterial conduct. But what will be thought of the levity of manner, and the insufficiency of evidence, on which Mr. Okeden has presumed to attempt to affix a stigma on "the bench" at Sturminster, and on the purity of motives and conduct, which, I boldly affirm, have always characterized the judicial acts of the four remaining justices whose conduct in this matter remains to be accounted for; what will be thought of this attempt on the part of Mr. Okeden to impute to them something like vindictive feelings towards the Rev. Henry Walter, because that highly respectable gentleman, "in the year 1823, appealed to the "Dorsetshire July quarter sessions against the "rate made for the purpose" of paying these roundsmen and stem-men (even granted that this rate had been *ministerially* allowed by us, which did not happen to be the case). When I declare, as I do from authority, that so far from opposing Mr. Walter on that occasion, I, for one, and my honourable colleague, the Rev. John Bastard, for another, actually voted in favour of the principle contended for, and the appeal which was entered and prosecuted by Mr. Walter; and that of the remaining two most honourable men, who, with Mr. Bastard and myself at that time constituted "the bench" at Sturminster Newton, one was absent from the sessions; and that, with respect to the other, from the lapse of time which has taken place, it is difficult to ascertain whether he was present, or how he voted upon that occasion. But when I state that the name of that one colleague, of whose presence and vote these doubts are entertained; when I state that his name is *Henry Seymour, Esq. of Hanford House*, I state enough to show that upon the name of an individual so truly good, so honourable, so upright, and exemplary as he is, it is out of the power of any man on earth to affix the shadow of an insinuation as to the

purity of his principles, or the correctness of his conduct as a gentleman and as a magistrate. I will only add, that this unkind insinuation of Mr. Okeden's is the more extraordinary and unexpected, when it is considered that Mr. Okeden himself was continually in attendance upon that very court of quarter sessions, which, at the Easter sessions of 1830, placed the parish of Hasilbury under our jurisdiction for the first time from and after the 1. of September then ensuing; just seven years after the appeal of Mr. Walter in 1823. I now pause a moment, at this stage of my inquiry, for the purpose of asking whether Mr. Okeden's report, with the suppression of these facts previously recited by me, and with charges and insinuations on his part, against the justices of this division, every one of which I have proved to have been insufficiently alleged. I ask whether this report, as far as the division over which we are presiding is concerned, can be considered as "a diligent and full inquiry "into the practical operation of the laws for "the relief of the poor," and an impartial, fair, open, and candid statement of facts, whereon his employers, the poor-law commissioners of England, can form correct opinions touching the effects produced by those laws. I have proved already that Mr. Okeden has not correctly stated even the amount of the poor-rate expended by the overseers of Hasilbury; and that he has mistaken and assigned the expenditure of one year for another. I have proved that Mr. Okeden has quoted the gross sum standing at the foot of the account, for the year 1831, stating that sum to have been "expended on the poor" in that particular year, without deducting the extraordinary sums levied upon and paid out of the poor-rate, amounting to 48*l.* 19*s.*, and without allowing for the sum of 16*l.* 17*s.* 4*d.* in hand, and therefore levied in, and belonging to a previous year,—making therefore, in his statement of expenditure for this one year, a mistake of no less than sixty-six pounds, sixteen shillings, and four-pence, upon the sum of 413*l.* 10*s.* 2*d.* I have also proved that Mr. Okeden has quoted the highest amount of expenditure, perhaps, ever known in the parish of Hasilbury, brought about too, as that excessive increase of poor-rate was, by the operation of external and internal causes, with which we, as justices of the division, had nothing to do—and for which, therefore, we ought not to have been blamed; and which circumstances, common diligence in the execution of his duty, as a commissioner paid out of the public purse, and common candour and justice towards the aforesaid magistrate, ought to have induced him to explain and notice, with the view, if no other motives intervened, of placing the population and expenditure of this parish in a true and just position relatively to each other. I have also proved, that within the three last years, in which the parish of Hasilbury has been under our magisterial control, there has been a yearly decrease of annual expenditure on the poor, amounting to

35 per cent. on the average of those years; and which, though eloquently explicit, when speaking of the parish of Cranbourne, touching the yearly decrease of parish rates brought about by the system of non-interference adopted by himself, Mr. Okeden has studiously omitted, and has not had the fairness or kindness to notice, when taking place in the division of those justices to whose administration of the poor-laws he chooses to be opposed. I have also proved that the insinuation which Mr. Okeden has uncharitably, and I must also say, very illiberally, made, touching the improper or apparently vindictive motives which have influenced our decisions, so far as the highly respectable rector and the overseers of Hasisbury are concerned, are not only groundless and untrue, but that they are attributable, if attributable to any one, to the justices of a neighbouring division,—to the justices of Blandford, and to them alone, whose allowance of the rate was appealed against, by Mr. Walter; and which justices, for a period of seven years after the determination of that question, alone interested in, and controlled the affairs of the parish of Hasisbury! Having proved thus much, and leaving the consideration of these facts to the candour and justice of the public, I now proceed to the further consideration of the final part of Mr. Okeden's report—so far as we, the said justices of the Sturminster division, are collectively affected by it.

STURMINSTER NEWTON PARISH.

Having thus disposed of the parish of Hasisbury Bryan, Mr. Okeden proceeds to make a sweeping and very comprehensive survey of the "district of Sturminster Newton;" meaning, I presume, the state and condition of the division generally; and which survey and summary is made in the following

very remarkable sentence:—"I have already named in my report on Dorsetshire, the district of Sturminster Newton, as the *worst* regulated as to poor concern, with the highest proportionate rates in the county: it is certain that in no district is there so much magisterial interference." Now the fair and only inference to be drawn from these words, is simply this; that the ill-regulation as to poor concerns, which pervades the whole division, is attributable to "magisterial interference: and that the proportion of poor-rate in this division is higher than it is in any other division of the whole county, and that such higher proportion is principally, if not solely, attributable to the interference also, of us, the justices aforesaid! But I not only deny absolutely and positively this statement of Mr. Okeden, but I proceed to show by facts which cannot be contradicted, beginning with the parish of Sturminster Newton, and tracing the effects of our system throughout the twenty parishes which constitute this division, that Mr. Okeden has again accused and misrepresented us in a most unwarrantable manner.

First, then, to commence with the town and parish of Sturminster Newton; I beg to state that the return made to the justices of this division, on oath, in pursuance of the 55. Geo. III., chap. 51, both as to the extent and this parish is as follows:

| ACRES, 3,837. | £. s. d. |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Annual value | 5,735 10 0 |
| Average amount of tithes | 1,000 0 0 |
| Stock in trade | 88 1 8 |
| Total annual value | £6,843 11 8 |

and that the population of the whole parish, according to the returns of the year 1831, amounts to 1,831 persons. The poor-rate from 1830 down to Ladyday, 1833, stands the value of precisely as follows:—

| Year. | Gross Expenditure. | Extra Disbursements. | Net Expenditure on the Poor. | Increase. |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------|
| 1831 and 1832 | £2,161 14 11 | £141 19 0 | £2,019 15 11 | £415 14 3 |
| 1832 and 1833 | 2,365 18 85 | 111 10 3 | 2,254 8 55 | 650 6 95 |

and the question is, whether, as assumed and stated by Mr. Okeden, this increase of poor-rate, in the parish of Sturminster, is attributable, either solely or principally, to "magisterial interference" or to other causes, distinct and reasonable, and beyond the control of those magistrates; and which causes of increase, duly considered, would lead to conclusions more just than those which Mr. Okeden has formed, so far as the conduct of the justices of this division is concerned on the one hand, and more correct, with a view of conveying to his Majesty's poor-law commissioners proper information touching the working of these laws upon the other. In order to arrive at this desirable end, I beg to state in the first place, that if the "scale," so prominently alluded to by Mr. Okeden, had been, or could have been, the cause of the increase of these poor-rates, in the town of Sturminster,

that increase would have taken place long before the period of 1832, in which year the first increase of any consequence, viz., an increase of 415*l.* 14*s.* 3*d.* over the amount of the previous year, took place upon the net expenditure of poor-rate; that "scale" having been in operation for nearly, if not more than twenty years, without intermission; and which increase, if Mr. Okeden had examined the "parish-books," according to his instructions, (which I am informed by the overseers of Sturminster he declined or neglected to do,) he would have found not to have taken place, passing over a long series of years, till the aforesaid year of 1832. Before I proceed to inquire into the causes of this increase, I will state, once for all, that "the scale" which has been acted upon in this division for so long a period of time, was brought into practice from a neighbouring division (Wincanton, in

the county of Somerset) a great number of years ago, the Wincanton division being in the northern direction of the county, closely adjoining to our own: it having been, I presume, the object of the judges who so introduced it, to assimilate as much as they could well do, the rate of relief in this neighbourhood generally; and as a great deal has been said about the nature and effects produced by this "scale," I here beg leave to present the public with a copy of the same as originally introduced, leaving them to calculate whether any human being can exist upon a sum less than that which the said "scale," when in use, allowed for their support; and whether, in fact, they can honestly exist upon it at all.

SCALE IN THE WINCANTON DIVISION.

For regulating the Allowance of Parochial Relief to the Poor, according to the price of bread, where there are two or more messing together in one family.

| When the Standard Wheaten Quarter Loaf is sold at | 20 | 19 | 18 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| The weekly allowance to be made up, including earnings for a Labouring man | s. | d. |
| For a Woman, or Boy, or Girl, above 14 years old | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| For a Child under 14 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 11 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

The earnings of a woman having three children under twelve years of age not to be taken into account.

In parishes where fuel is not supplied to the poor on moderate terms, the magistrates will make an additional allowance to the pauper.

Mr. Okeden, however, has stated, taking the particular parish of Haselbury as a model, that the wages which are earned by a man, his wife, and three children, amount to 41*l.* 5*s.* per annum; and he has apparently made this remark, with a view of showing that the justices of this division are not warranted under such circumstances, in making any grant to a family at all, where wages so great can be received almost by asking for them. But I beg to inform Mr. Okeden that he is in error, if he conceives, or being told as much, believes, that generally speaking, a labouring man with a wife and three children can earn anything like the wages here stated by him. I affirm, first, that in many parishes, no work can be got by a labouring man at all at certain seasons of the year; secondly, if work can be got at seven shillings a week, that in wet days and bad weather they are allowed nothing by their employer, and are sent home, to my certain knowledge, without a farthing; in proof of which, I state as a fact, that in the parish of Sturminster Newton, during the hay harvest, and during last summer time, no less than forty persons were dismissed and sent home on one single morning, in consequence of a storm of rain rendering the hay unfit to be carried,—and that in the winter months, in hard frost and deep snow, when labourers cannot work, if work could be provided for them, similar deductions must be made from this general assumed amount of 13*s. 6d.* per week; and yet Mr. Okeden, without sufficient inquiry into these facts, or the practice of the division, has eagerly caught this gross amount of wages, and rated the same at 41*l. 5s.* per annum; as if no abatement whatever was to be made, or ever was made, from the same!! But I go further—I deny that a woman who has a husband and three children to wash and mend and provide food for, can earn the sum of 2*s. 6d.* per week by button-making: and I really believe that the poor man's income is rated from 7*l.* to 10*l.* per annum higher than it really is, taking one year with another. But I also declare that if, as assumed by Mr. Okeden, there could be earned and annually enjoyed by an able-bodied man, with a wife and three children, the sum of 13*s. 6d.* per week, or 41*l. 5s.* per annum, as stated by him, in no case whatever should we, as justices of this division, order or allow them a single farthing by way of relief—our rate of allowance to the same number of persons, including house-rent, being only 10*s.* per week, which is 3*s. 6d.* per week less than the above sum stated by Mr. Okeden! The aforesaid scale, however, was, as before stated, put an end to and destroyed "immediately after the riots," in the year 1-31; and a more liberal rate of allowance was adopted for the time.

being ; varying according to circumstances,—departed from where necessary,—and abridged or extended, or withheld entirely, (as I shall presently show, in contradiction to Mr. Okeden,) where the character of the party was undeserving. But I repeat, that if the scale had been the cause,—and if “magisterial interference” had been the cause also of the sudden increase of the poor-rates in Sturminster, it is remarkable indeed that such increase did not take place during the twenty years that the scale had been at work, prior to 1832 ;—and during which time, to my own certain knowledge, the same amount of “magisterial interference” had been used without producing such increase. What then are the causes of this increase—and of the moral wretchedness and “ill-regulation” of the parish of Sturminster Newton, which, as a consequence, have succeeded ? I state first, that there has been, within the last ten years, an increase of population within the town of Sturminster, amounting to *two hundred and nineteen persons* ; and which number,—thrown upon a town already over-populated, without any, even the slightest increase of profitable labour, must have produced, as they have produced, an increase both of poverty and expense. Now I will assume that one-third only of these persons, (increased by this time to full 260 persons.) have been thrown upon the parish, which will amount to seventy-three persons ; and which persons, at the common and ordinary rate of relief, or consumption, (call it what you will,) at 1s. 6d. per head, will thus cost the parish the sum of 277l. 8s. per annum ; and which sum I produce as the first item by way of a set-off to, and as a means of accounting for, this sudden increase of 415l. 11s. 3d., merely adding that the extreme pressure of these children could not have been felt at once, or be reasonably expected to take place, till they had arrived at the period of 10 or 12 years of age. But I beg leave to say, that there has been also, a sudden decrease of expenditure of capital as well, within the town and parish of Sturminster, within the precise period of the two last years ;—the very years in which this sudden increase has taken place in the poor-rates ; which, of itself, connected with one more cause about to be assigned, and leaving the increase of population, with a decrease of profitable labour totally out of the question, would be sufficient to account for this sudden increase of poor-rate to the extent aforesaid. I state it as a fact, which Mr. Okeden might have learnt by common inquiry, that from 1825 to 1830, two benevolent and most excellent individuals residing within the parish continued to employ no less than 27 or 28 men belonging to the parish, at the rate of 10s. per week ; and that their expenditure for that period, taken at the extreme amount could not have been less than *three hundred per annum* ; and which sum, in the year 1830, was diverted into another channel, and withdrawn entirely from this particular object. Here, then, is the

additional sum of 300l. per annum, to be made up by the overseers of this parish ; for out of their department only can the deficit be made up ; making up the sum of 577l. 8s. annual loss to the parish, and additional increase of the Sturminster poor-rate, without the slightest particle of “magisterial interference” on the part of the justices of this division ; and when to this is added the fact, that from the depression and distress which have fallen upon the shopkeepers and farmers, there has been a manifest and lamentable decrease of employment and demand for labour, (and which will be conceived to be the case when I state that if the whole labouring population of the parish were employed and apportioned, it would require only one man to every seventy acres of land !) ; and that from one cause and another the surplus of able-bodied men have not been engaged by the merchants in the Newfoundland trade as they used to be formerly, the average per annum, who were sent out from Sturminster, till within these ten years, being six, and the same number engaged and sent out, since that period, being only two, and occasionally three persons ; thereby throwing the weight and pressure of thirty or forty men at the least upon the parish, on the average of ten years, together with the chance, I might also say the certainty of their contracting marriages, and burdening the parish with a family in the mean time ; I say that when from these causes combined, we find that the non-employment of the labouring poor, has arrived to the present pitch, we shall feel ourselves enabled on the one hand to account for the increase of poor-rate which has taken place at this particular crisis, without tracing it to “magisterial influence,” with which I now proceed to show that it has had nothing to do ;—and to feel ourselves justified in expressing our astonishment on the other, that none of those causes should have been noticed by Mr. Okeden in that part of his report which has been “published by authority !” But there are other causes which will account for the aforesaid increase of the Sturminster poor-rate, and which in one sense will justify the declaration of Mr. Okeden that the parish of Sturminster has been an “ill-regulated parish.” About twelve months ago, the late overseers, without consulting the justices, placed the able-bodied single men of the parish who were out of employ, on the following most insufficient allowance : they told them that they should work at the gravel-pits till they could earn 3s. per week ; and that from and after that period they might go where they pleased, for that they should neither be employed nor paid by the overseer of that parish any longer ! This system, as might be supposed, it being a *penalty on celibacy, and a premium on crime*, led, as it will continue to lead, to consequences the most fatal to the future prosperity of Sturminster. But I ask, even under these extreme and most lamentable circumstances of “ill-regulation” and improvidence,—not on the part of the justices, but of the

overseers of the town of Sturminster, where was the "magisterial interference" so much complained of by Mr. Okeden? How many summonses were granted by them, at the suit of the unmarried, oppressed, and ill-paid paupers of the parish of Sturminster;—how many orders of relief were made by the busy and "interfering magistrates" of this mismanaged division? None! No one single summons was issued—no one single order of maintenance was made—and these cases, as at Cranbourne, were allowed to "rest on their own merits," it having been the practice, and it being now the practice of myself and brother justices, never to interfere if we consider that the party complaining has enough for a bare subsistence. But I state, as an additional fact, by way of showing the increase of the poor's expenditure in this parish, that the very trifling sum thus afforded to the single man, amounted to 150*l.* per annum. I beg also to state, as a proof of our forbearance and non-interference with parochial management, that upon the 22. of the present month, thirty-nine of the able-bodied paupers of this parish, came to my house in a body, complaining of ill-usage on the part of the then newly-appointed overseers, and asking for my advice and assistance on the occasion. My first step was, to order every one of these men to return to their parish, leaving as representatives of each class of complainants two married and two single men to detail and to explain to me their grievances: and although, upon examining these four men I found, that without due notice, the new overseers had reduced the single men to the allowance of 2*s.* 6*d.* per week, instead of 3*s.* as previously allowed, requiring them to work, as they now work, twelve hours per day for the whole week, for this miserable pittance, yet so far from exercising any "magisterial interference" in the matter, I issued no summons—I made them no promise—merely saying that the justices of the division would hold a conference with the parish, taking at the same time the precaution of driving into the town, and telling the whole number of fifty men, who had all struck work, and were assembled at the Crown Inn, that by taking the law into their own hands, and by combining as they had done for an unlawful purpose, viz. that of intimidating the overseers, and by leaving their work, which all of them had done on that day, they had forfeited our protection on those accounts, inasmuch as we had and ever should make in our decisions *distinction as to character*, and I can state that up to this time—twenty-five days after the event above alluded to, no steps whatever have been taken either by myself or brother justices to coerce the overseers; although my own opinion most decidedly is—that now that the men are again quietly at work, that the sum of 2*s.* 6*d.* to single men, should be increased to the sum of 3*s.* from which it was abridged, and the rather, as they are now compelled to work six days instead of two, as heretofore, and that too at twelve hours per

day for this wretched insufficient sum, and because no single man, without the advantage derived from numbers in a family, can subsist honestly for less than 3*s.* per week. It will be expected also, whilst I am enumerating the causes which have led to this increase, that I should state the average number of men, able-bodied men which have been out of employ in the parish of Sturminster within the ten years last past, and which I do, by stating, that no less than forty men with their families are in the aforesaid most deplorable condition; and I then leave any one to wonder, if they can, at the increase and amount of the Sturminster parochial poor-rate expenditure, coupled as that non-employment has been with other causes, and connected as these causes have also been by the levying of fourteen special and extraordinary county rates, within this period, or nearly so, for the erection and completion of the Lunatic County Asylum, at Foreton, and which causes, collectively taken, will surely be more than sufficient to account for the increased expenditure of the year ending Ladyday, 1833, over that of 1830 and 1831; amounting in the gross to 650*l.* 6*s.* 9*d.* increase upon a population of 1,831 persons under the peculiar and distressing circumstances above alluded to.

I now proceed to notice the sole remaining charge of Mr. Okeden against the justices of this division, contained as that most serious accusation against us is in the following words of his report: "*In this district indeed the overseers know so well the inability of resistance, that to avoid trouble, expense, and reproof, they generally accede to the demands, and settle all claims, not by character or merit, but by the rules of addition and subtraction.*" In replying to this charge, I do not content myself with making, as Mr. Okeden has unfortunately done more than once, an allegation without evidence to support it, but I deny the charge both in the name of the overseers of the division, and in the name of the justices of this division as well; and I proceed to show, by recent proofs, that our practice is quite contrary to that which is thus imputed to us by Mr. Okeden. I must state in the first place, that with the exception of Hasilbury Bryan, and Sturminster generally, and of Stalbridge and Iwerne Courtney parishes very rarely and occasionally, (four parishes out of the number of twenty, as contained in our whole division), we scarcely ever hear or see, or come in contact with the overseers of any one single parish, except in cases of removal, cases of bastardy, or when their accounts are made up and presented for allowance at the end of the parochial year. This is a fact which I state on authority which cannot be questioned, and therefore I affirm that if the overseers of these twenty parishes "accede to the demands and settle the claims" of the paupers who apply to them, "not by character or merit, but by the rules of addition and subtraction:" I affirm that it is a practice

which we have not sanctioned,—that it is one which we are ignorant of,—and what is more, that it is one which we do not believe to exist. As a proof, however, that when overseers choose to take the trouble to lay complaints against the "characters" of paupers (which we are continually and incessantly obliged to do, and which they will not take the trouble to do, as we can prove, if necessary, on oath, both by our clerk and the admission of overseers of the several parishes as well), as a proof that we have recourse to those powers of discrimination which as men and individuals we ought to exercise, and which as magistrates, in accordance with the spirit of 59. Geo. III., chap. 12, we are bounden to carry into effect in all cases that come before us; as a proof that "character and merit" do form the basis of our decisions, I most positively declare that in several instances which have lately come before us, even from the parish of Hasilbury, and also from the towns of Stalbridge and Sturminster Newton, and other parishes as well, we have refused relief to a certain number of applicants on account of their indifferent characters; and I also state that in the only four cases which have come before us in the past year, from the populous town of

Stalbridge, we have, on the complaint of the overseers, committed one, and reprimanded three others, the overseers stating that the above example would answer the ends of justice, and the object they had in view.

In the town and parish of Sturminster also, where, from the state of mismanagement on the part of the late overseers, a fearful amount of crime is now taking place, and will continue to take place, if, as I hope will be the case, a better system of pauper management is not speedily introduced (the allotment system being now about to be tried, and the labour rate being about to be had recourse to at Michaelmas next, both of which, in the opinion of the assistant overseer, will reduce the poor-rate one-fourth for the time to come). As a proof that we have not been idle and remiss in our duty in this parish, I state as a fact, that we have not only refused relief to undeserving characters, but that we have done the utmost in our power to suppress every sort of crime, and that even within the year now last past we have dealt with the criminal, and idle, and disorderly, of the parish of Sturminster, as follows: and this too in many of the cases at the suit of the overseer:—

| Offence. | Committed. | Fined. | Bound over, &c. |
|-------------------------------|------------|--------|-----------------|
| For assaults..... | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| For drunkenness..... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Idle and not working..... | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Blind beggar..... | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Violation of the Sabbath..... | 8 | 0 | 0 |

Total punished by the justices of this division from Sturminster only—nineteen persons.

In my own parish, the parish of Stock Gaylard, I can also affirm that the only man who has applied for relief for the period of upwards of ten years, was refused relief by the justices of this division on the plea of bad character under the following circumstances. I have employed, for a series of years, nearly every man in the parish, able-bodied or otherwise, capable of doing work, and the pauper above alluded to amongst them. I had apprenticed his son, and placed out his two daughters at service, and had given him some fir poles to build up a shed with: not contented however with taking the trees which had been given him he cut sixteen others standing in one of my plantations, and for this act of dishonesty he was dismissed by myself, and refused, most properly, any parochial relief by the justices of the division: but which act of dishonesty, after a penance of one twelve months on the part of the offender, I have pardoned and overlooked: the man being restored to his usual work, and to a state of comparative affluence and comfort: but showing, in conjunction with the above cases, that a deficiency of "character or merit" meets with no countenance or encouragement from the

justices of this division. Whilst upon this subject, I will also add, speaking of my own parish, that I have apportioned at moderate rent, from half-an-acre to three quarters of an acre of land to every labourer of this parish, and to a certain number of the adjoining parish of Lydlinch as well, in which a portion of my property is situated; that every man has from one to two or more pigs; no one, with the exception aforesaid, having been before the bench either for relief, or for any act of dishonesty for the period of more than ten years, (I might perhaps say for double that period,) and that our poor-rate does not exceed the trifling sum of 1s. 4d. in the pound; and I have no doubt, that if Mr. Okeden had inquired generally throughout the parishes which surround it, as to the state and condition of the poor, and the effects of the present system of magisterial control—if he had made a fair and general inquiry throughout the whole division, "dwelling, (to quote again his "Instructions from the Central Board" from which he has so lamentably departed,) dwelling principally on those facts from which some general inference may be drawn, and which form the rule rather than the exception,"—I have no doubt whatever, but that similar results would have been arrived at, tending to

show the well-being of those parishes generally, the good character of their inhabitants, and the discreet and cautious mo're of conduct of the magistracy of the division under whose control they are placed. Instead of so doing, instead of adducing facts and arguments, "modera instances," and proofs in confirmation of his bold assertion, "That the district of Sturminster Newton is the worst regulated as to poor concerns, with the highest proportionate rates in the county;" instead of conforming himself to the rules and directions of the poor-law commissioners, who tell him to dwell principally "on those facts from which some general inference may be drawn, and which form the rule rather than the exception," Mr. Okeden has chosen to invert this generous maxim, and has fastened with avidity upon the single parish of Hasilbury, which forms the exception instead of the rule, even according to Mr. Okeden's own statements, taking them as they stand; and then most illogically and unjustly arguing from particulars to universals, has ventured and endeavoured from a solitary instance of presumed parochial irregularity and mismanagement (admitting it for mere argument to have been so), to infer, and to charge the justices of the division with a *system of bad management, and irregularity of practice throughout their whole division or district*. But I ask, where are the proofs of this assumption and declaration on the part of Mr. Okeden? Where are the proofs on his part that our division is visited and afflicted "with the highest proportionate rates in the county?" Why has not Mr. Okeden produced a schedule of the whole division, with the poor-rate expenditure, and population and poundage of every parish, compared and contrasted with schedules from other divisions, "from whence some general inference might be drawn," and where the "general rule" of our practice, compared with the practice of other divisions, might be seen and fairly appreciated? Why has not Mr. Okeden done this, instead of selecting, as he has done, one single parish only, seemingly with a view of illustrating his own peculiar opinions (which have been repudiated by the justices of the whole county in quarter sessions assembled), and seemingly for the purpose of imputing to the justices of this division motives of conduct and feelings of resentment and unkindness towards the rector of Hasilbury, which they shrink from with abhorrence? What Mr. Okeden has not done, I here beg leave to do for him: I present an analysis of the poor-law expenditure, the population, and the amount of poor rate in the pound, of every parish in the Sturminster division: I do so in justice to his Majesty's Poor-Law Commissioners, who have, as it would appear, been sadly misinformed by Mr. Okeden upon this subject; I do so in justice as well to the magistrates of this calumniated division; and I ask with confidence, whether Mr. Okeden can produce a more satisfactory analysis

from any other division in the whole county of Dorset?

[Here was a Table proving the falsehood of Okeden's report; but it was not necessary to insert it here.]

Lastly, I must observe, though most reluctantly, that, taken as a whole, nothing can be more unfair or unsatisfactory, than Mr. Okeden's poor-law report, if general information and correct views of the "practical operation of the poor-laws" are to be deduced from its pages, and which will appear to be the case, from a cursory glance over the surface of the same. First, with regard to Cranbourne: in this parish, Mr. Okeden states that "the average wages are 8s. and 9s. per week; that the population consists of 2,158 persons; and that there are 13,052 acres in the parish; that there is a pottery which employs 110 persons; that the woods afford very profitable piece-work labour, in fencing, burling, and sagoting, at each of which employments an able-bodied man may earn from 12s. to 14s. per week; that the labourer has another great advantage, he is allowed to cut turf for himself gratis, so that his fuel costs him nothing but the labour, and its vicinity to the heath does not require carriage home." Mr. Okeden also states that "ten acres of land have lately been given up to the poor," and further, that "no distinction is made by individuals in the wages of single and married men;" and then takes credit to himself, that such a parish within his own division is in a prosperous and well-regulated condition, under such circumstances!! But let me ask any man, whether it is fair to contrast a parish, thus blessed with advantages of various kinds, as the parish of Cranbourne is beyond all doubt, with such a parish as Sturminster Newton for instance; the difference between the two parishes being simply this. first, that in Cranbourne there are 2,158 persons apportioned to 13,052 acres, or one person only on an average to six acres of land, whilst in Sturminster Newton, there are 1,831 persons apportioned on 3,837 acres, there being little more than two acres only to each person; there are no woods where an able-bodied man can earn "8s. or 9s." much less "12s. and 14s. per week;" the poor man at Sturminster is not "allowed to cut turf for himself gratis," on the contrary he has to pay 1s. 4d. per cwt. for his coal: at Cranbourne, there is, in addition to the gardens which are attached to cottages "which border the heath," ten acres of land, apportioned to the poor by the lord of the manor: at Sturminster, the poor man gives on an average 5s. per annum for his house, without a garden, and there has been no land provided for the poor till this present time, that is, from and after this present Ladyday: at Cranbourne there is a pottery employing 110 persons; at Sturminster there is no pottery, merely a brick-yard employing about four or five persons of the parish, and this in the spring and sum-

mer only; at Cranbourne, the able-bodied (all of whom appear to be employed) earn in ordinary cases 8s. and 9s., and in other cases the "very profitable wages of 12s. and 13s. per week;" at Sturminster there are generally fifty, always forty, men out of employ, who are paid thus—single men, 2s. 6d. per week, for their week's work; married men and their wives, 4s. 6d. for the same all the year round: and yet with these differences, a contrast is attempted to be drawn by Mr. Okeden between the two parishes, as if they were in circumstances exactly parallel; and as if there was no more need of "magisterial interference" in the one case than in the other! Mr. Okeden next illustrates the value of non-interference on the part of magistrates, by presenting us with a description of the highly moral and well-regulated condition of his own parish: the parish of More Critchell. But what is the state of that parish as shown by Mr. Okeden? There are 1,260 acres in More Critchell, and a population of 304 persons; being six acres and more to each inhabitant. There are only "about twenty-five men and ten boys able for the field and barn work," according to the report; it is therefore quite certain that these persons cannot be sufficient to do the work of the parish; and which I have heard from unquestionable authority to be the case. Mr. Okeden boasts, as well he might (for to him and to Mr. Sturt, the two sole proprietors, the greatest credit is due for the management of their parish), that "there are never any men out of employ," and then takes credit to himself that "there is no scale or make-up system." But Mr. Okeden ought to have assigned the reason, and that a very simple one, viz., that in such a parish, with the advantages of high wages, full employ, and deficient population when compared with the extent of acres requiring cultivation, where "every cottage has a large garden," and where "potato land is let to the labourers by the farmer at the usual rate;" where "for any extra job, application for labour is made to the neighbouring parishes;" "where no increase of cottages is allowed above the requisite habitation required for the sufficiency of the labourers of the parish;" in short, where every thing is done by the praiseworthy and most excellent proprietors above-named, to **KEEP UP THE MORAL EXCELLENCE OF THE PEOPLE, AND TO KEEP DOWN THE PRESSURE AND INCREASE OF THE POPULATION, AND OF THE POOR-LAWS.** Mr. Okeden ought to have stated, that in a parish so regulated, the application of the "scale and make-up system" does not take place, simply because it is not wanted; and, according to the nature of things, cannot take place by possibility. But to produce such a parish as an illustration of the "practical operation" of the poor-law system, under ordinary circumstances, or as a parish fit and proper to be compared to Sturminster Newton, with its forty able-bodied men out of employ all the year round; or to compare such a parish with the town of Stour-

bridge, in our division, where the pauper population is situated very nearly in the same unfortunate condition, or even with the parish of Hasisbury Bryan, or the generality of parishes in our division, where there are **NO RESIDENT LANDLORDS**, is not only unfair and impracticable, but in the way of argument, absolutely ridiculous. Again, as to the comparative superiority of the state and condition of the towns and parishes of Poole and Bridport, in favour of the existence of which Mr. Okeden has given his opinion in the concluding portion of his report, and as to whether "the poor of boroughs where little or no magisterial interference takes place, being superior in moral character and appearance to the majority of country parishes," and which opinion Mr. Okeden has illustrated and confirmed by adding the instances of Poole and Bridport, in this county, I can only say, that when it is considered that Poole and Bridport are seaport towns, where trade is known to flourish to a very great extent, and where there are outlets of various kinds and descriptions for the surplus population of each town and parish, the well-doing and want of distress amongst the lower orders of such towns and parishes will easily be accounted for, and as readily believed: but if Mr. Okeden means to affirm, that there is a lesser amount of crime amongst the lower orders of the several towns within this county, than in the "majority of parishes" within it, and even within our own division of Sturminster Newton, I beg leave respectfully to deny that statement; affirming, as I do, that there are at least ten or twelve parishes out of the twenty constituting this very division, where a pauper is never known to be brought to the petty sessions for the commission of the smallest offence, least of all to the quarter sessions, or to the assizes: and lastly, that I for one, though I entertain and profess the highest respect for them, will never allow that in any one department of their office, are the duties which devolve upon them more discreetly or correctly executed by the justices of boroughs than by the justices of counties, by those of the county of Dorset pre-eminently above all others.

I cannot conclude these observations without expressing my deep regret at finding myself opposed on such a subject and in such a manner to a gentleman so generally respected as Mr. Okeden: but, in defence of our character as justices, and in defence of a system of legal practice, on the **JUDICIOUS CONTINUATION** of which I for one believe that the security and existence of the very frame-work of society depends; I say that silence on my part would have been guilty acquiescence, and a tacit approbation of charges and of doctrines which I repudiate from my very heart. I beg most distinctly to declare, however, that I believe these errors and misapprehensions of Mr. Okeden's to be perfectly unintentional and inadvertent on his part; and that Mr. Okeden was not aware, in framing this report,

that he was doing otherwise than what he thought he had a right to do, reasoning from certain facts and premises before him, such as they were. But Mr. Okeden must be informed that we could not and ought not to be indifferent to a series of severe censures proceeding from a gentleman clothed with the authority of an assistant commissioner, and that to affirm that one division in a whole county is the "worst regulated as to poor concerns," and that in a particular parish the justices of the same division "have done all in their power to counteract and thwart" the rector of that parish, merely because he appealed to a certain rate, with which, as it turns out, they had nothing to do—is beyond all doubt to impugn the magisterial agency of those justices in the most sweeping and wholesale manner, and at the same time to assail the purity of their motives and the uprightness of their conduct as gentlemen. I will also take the liberty of adding that if his Majesty's poor-law commissioners misled or misinformed by Mr. Okeden, should be induced to bring in and to pass a law, whereby the able-bodied labourers of this kingdom shall be deprived, under the pressure of occasional distress and non-employment, of that salutary relief which the present poor-laws afford them, I am convinced that they will drive into a servile war the starving millions who will be goaded by hunger, by oppression, and by the lamentation of their children crying for bread, to the extremity of resistance, and that the rebellion in arms, of men and multitudes fighting for existence, will be chargeable upon their heads. Mr. Okeden, when sitting on a memorable occasion by our side, once heard a clergyman of a certain town within our division declare, upon oath to us, at Sturminster Newton, that the dogs in his kennel were better fed and lodged than the paupers of that town; and I would ask Mr. Okeden, I would ask him as a Christian, in the language of scripture, "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" And I would ask him, as a gentleman of kindness and consideration, how such a system of cruelty, neglect, and wretchedness, such as we all know to exist in many parishes in England, is to be amended, and is to be put down, but by the occasional exercise of "magisterial interference?"

I will only add, that although I have had reason to lament, to be grieved, and to be surprised at the charges which have emanated from misguided, ill-informed, or disaffected persons, against the conduct and character of the magistracy of this kingdom, I could not have been brought to believe, if my own eyes had not been my witnesses, that any reflections upon the justices of this county would have been made by any one (by a magistrate of that county above all others) without the most substantial and unquestionable evidence to support and to uphold them. Least of all

did I think, that as a return for the unmitting and anxious and laborious exertions, in discharge of my magisterial duties, covering the period of twenty years, during which time scarcely a single order or decision of mine or of my honourable and most highly respectable colleagues has been called in question, much less reversed by appeal or otherwise. I repeat it, and I do so with emotions of regret deeper and more poignant than I can really give utterance to, that I did not expect to have "lived and seen this day," when, as a return for these exertions, I and my brother justices should have been presented by Mr. Okeden with the unsparing measure of his censure and condemnation, grounded upon testimonies and proofs which we hold to be insufficient, applied against us as they have also been, without an opportunity having been afforded us either of defence or explanation. We have, however, made our appeal to our country, to his Majesty's poor-law commissioners, and to the *candour of Mr. Okeden*, feeling assured, satisfied, and convinced, that the *golden scales of justice will strike the balance in our behalf*.

Stock-house, Dorset, 13. May, 1833.

P. S. I feel it right to add, that I have submitted this statement of facts as a defence on the part of the justices of the Sturminster division of this county, to the whole six magistrates with whom I have the honour to act in this division, who have not disapproved of anything therein contained. And that if any error should be proved to exist, I shall promptly and humbly endeavour to amend, and to express my regret at the existence of the same.

A Letter to the Rev. Harry Farr Yeatman, on his Inquiry, &c.—By D. O. P. OKEDEN, Esq.

More Crichton, 10. June, 1833.
Rev. Sir,—I have read the pamphlet lately published by you, purporting to be an Inquiry into the merits of my Poor-Law Report;—though, in fact, what has been hitherto printed by authority, is a very short extract from the general report, as it will be read before the House of Commons. Had your Inquiry been confined merely to the manner in which my duty, as assistant commissioner was performed, I should not have taken any public notice of it, holding myself responsible for the correct performance of that duty to the Central Board of Poor-Law Commissioners, and to them alone. But when the most exaggerated misrepresentations of my words and conduct, on several occasions, are brought forward, and when my general character is assailed, in no very measured terms of vituperation, I can no longer be silent. I shall confine my observations entirely to these misrepresentations. On our respective opinions, upon the general

ministration of the poor-laws, I shall not touch; nor shall I say one word on your charges of incorrectness, and even of something worse, in the performance of my duty as assistant commissioner. I have transmitted a copy of your Inquiry to the central board, and stated that to them I am ready to afford any explanation which may be required. I proceed then, first, to page 11 of your pamphlet:—After stating the cause of the meeting at Blandford, in 1830, you say, “At this meeting at Blandford, Mr. Okeden broached for the first time, in a formal manner, the doctrine which he has since promulgated and maintained, that no relief whatever ought to be afforded to the able-bodied man, and that if he and his family could not subsist upon their wages, they might lie down and die by the road-side (these were the words of Mr. Okeden), whether the wages so received, were or were not, per head, sufficient for the support of the able-bodied father and his family.”

To this assertion of yours, *as thus stated*, and now publicly made, with all the emphasis of italics, I offer my most solemn and direct denial.

You are too good a scholar, sir, not to know, that context is absolutely necessary to the right understanding of expressed opinion; and that the suppression of half a speech will often place the other half in a light totally at variance with the feelings and opinions of the speaker. I will call to your recollection, and I hope to that of the other magistrates who were present at the Blandford meeting, the real and exact purport of what I then said.

I opposed at that period, what you term the *soothing system*; I objected to making promises, the keeping of which was perfectly impossible; I protested against that baneful curse, the relief of able-bodied men in employ from the poor-book, for the purpose of making up low wages. I was asked by Sir John Smith, yourself, I forget which, whether I was prepared, then, to see the men and their families die by the road-side. I answered, “that question is somewhat difficult to reply to. I say yes,—but that extremity never can happen; for on the refusal of parish relief, wages would immediately rise, and if they did not so immediately, private charity would step in to prevent so dreadful a catastrophe.”

These, sir, were the words of Mr. Okeden. To quote the latter portion of them did not, I resume, suit the object of your Inquiry. Now, and you waited, as in common fairness you ought, for the publication of my entire report, it will appear before the House of Commons, you would have seen, that so far from advocating, what you term “an extraordinary and unchristian doctrine,” I deprecate as an act of arbitrariness and injustice, the refusal of relief to able-bodied men in employ until the superfluity of labourers, created by the present vicious system of the scale and make-up, be dispelled, either in this country, or in her colonies.

In the expression of the “unchristian doctrine,” I was supported, as you say, by one magistrate, and by one alone. To his kindly feeling, and still kinder acts of benevolence to every poor person on his large estates, all who know him will bear ample testimony, and, on every subject connected with rural concerns and rural police, whenever I have the satisfaction of agreeing with that gentleman, I feel a strong confirmation of my own opinion.

Your account of what passed at the quarter sessions, in April, 1830, I will merely answer by saying, that the withdrawing of a motion does not necessarily arise from a conviction that the opposers of it are in the right. In the case to which you allude, I withdrew my motion upon the suggestion of Mr. Banks, that the period of enforcing it would so immediately follow the agricultural riots, that considerable fresh excitement might ensue. When you speak of my failing to persuade the magistrates of the illegality of that system, which I opposed, you may have forgotten, although I strongly pressed it on the notice of the court, that, at the two assizes preceding those sessions, the Judges, Alderson and Taunton, both eminent as lawyers, did, in their charges to the grand jury, insist on the unlawfulness of the relief of able-bodied men, in employ, and urged them, as landowners and magis rates, to put a stop to it in their several districts.

I now, sir, come to your charges against my conduct at Sturminster. Throughout the whole of my progress, in execution of the commission, I endeavoured, as indeed I was directed to do, to fix my sitting, if I could, on a day of petty sessions. I always met the magistrates in their justice-room, and then, as was absolutely necessary, retired to another: but never without saying that, if any of them would afford me their attendance and assistance, I should feel much gratified. I pursued this line of conduct at Sturminster, with the exception of examining the Sturminster overseers in the presence of the magistrates, and which, if I do not err, I did from my own suggestion to you. Besides, you must, surely, sir, recollect, you cannot possibly have forgotten, that previous to the sitting at Sturminster, I wrote to you, and, in the strongest terms, requested your special assistance and co-operation. Is it quite fair, then, to talk of “private rooms,” “behind the scenes,” “green bag,” and “lion’s mouth?” The room in which I sat was the farmer’s common room, the door was always open, and there never were less than twenty persons present, all listening to what was going on. If the magistrates did not join me, the fault was not mine. What then, after all, sir, is “the head and front of my offending?” Is it that I have spoken irreverently of the practical operation of the poor-laws in the Sturminster division? In my report to the central board, I have stated, that it appeared to me, on investigation, that the division of Beaminster was the best managed,

as to its poor concerns, in Dorsetshire, and that the division of Sturminster Newton was the worst.

I said so then, because I thought so; I say so now, because I think so still. But I never did, nor do I, blame the magistrates of the latter division. I know, sir, that they, and that you in particular, have done much to counteract the mismanagement of overseers, though I entirely disapprove of your scale-system. Let me observe to you, sir, that the words "magisterial interference," which seem to have given so great offence, apply as much to a useful and necessary interference as to any other species whatever. You have often, sir, deplored to me the necessary interference which you were compelled to use in the towns of Sturminster and Stalbridge; and I do not hesitate to say, that, with one exception, they appeared to me the two worst-regulated parishes which I had investigated, in the whole of my progress. I cannot conclude my letter without protesting against your insinuation, that I wish to depreciate the provincial magistrates of England. No man holds them in higher respect than I do, and I will yield to no one in sincere esteem for those of Dorsetshire; an esteem founded on the intimate knowledge of their zeal and uprightness in the discharge of their useful and laborious duties.

I have deemed these few observations, which I have addressed to you, necessary for the establishment of the truth, as far as my own words and personal conduct are connected with your Inquiry. I trust, sir, that they are made without any of that bitterness of personal invective, which forms so striking a feature in your inquiry.

I remain,

Rev. Sir

Your most obedient humble servant,
D. O. P. OKEDEN.

**A Letter to D. O. P. Okeden, Esq.,
on the Merits of his Poor-Law Report.
By the Rev. HARRY FARR YEATMAN,
LL.B.**

Stock-house, 13. June, 1833.

SIR,—In justice to the magistrates of this calumniated division, as well as with the view of rendering due justice to yourself, I feel it to be a duty very briefly to reply to your published letter of the 10. instant, written on your part in answer to my Inquiry into the Merits of your Poor-Law Report, so far as the same has been "published by authority." You commence that letter by informing me, "had your Inquiry been confined merely to the manner in which my duty as assistant-commissioner was performed, I should not have taken any public notice of it, holding my self responsible for the correct performance of that duty to the central board of poor-law

" commissioners, and to them alone." Now surely it is rather hard upon a bunch of justices, when their legal practice is found fact with and condemned, when their division is pronounced to be "THE WORST REGULATED AS TO POOR CONCERNs, WITH THE HIGHEST PROPORTIONATE RATES IN THE COUNTY," without a tittle of evidence to support these charges, being adduced on your part; when their conduct towards the very respectable rector of a certain parish is represented as having been actuated by an implied vindictive feeling as well, which we have proved could not by possibility exist; surely, sir, it is rather extraordinary to deny to those justices the common privilege of complaint, and to deny that anything in the shape even of explanation on the part of those who thus attack them, is due to the persons who thus consider themselves to have been unjustly and groundlessly accused, and that too, when no one single fact adduced by them in their defence has been denied or called in question! You proceed thus:—"But when the most exaggerated misrepresentations of my words and conduct on several occasions are brought forward, and when my general character is assailed, in no very measured terms of vituperation, I can no longer be silent." I am really at a loss to conceive in what part of my "Inquiry," such language or sentiments are to be found, deserving such severity of denunciation as this. My sole object in quoting the words which were used by you at the special meeting at Blandford, in the month of January, 1831 (in so far as I recollect the same), was to show that the doctrine touching non-relief to able-bodied paupers maintained by you on that occasion, was opposed by the majority of the magistrates who were at that time present, as well as by the whole COURT OF QUARTER SESSIONS helden at Dorchester in the month of April, then next ensuing; and that we, the justices of the Sturminster division, who had been censured or reflected upon by you for affording relief to able-bodied men in distress, had simply acted in unison with the justices of this county, on the occasions aforesaid. If, however, I have been guilty of a "misrepresentation of your words" used upon that occasion, I am most sincerely desirous of apologizing to yourself, and to the honourable magistrate who coincided with you in opinion on that day, provided that he should conceive that he, also, has been misrepresented. To the best of my recollection, the facts of the case are these. In the course of our deliberation at Blandford, you asserted broadly that "no relief to able-bodied men in employ" shou'd be allowed by justices. I for one, and the honourable baronet to whom you allude, Sir John Smith, for another, appeared to be struck with astonishment and alarm at the promulgation of such a doctrine, knowing, as we did, the results it must have led to. I am authorised to say that Sir John Smith then demanded, "Are you then prepared to see as a consequence, me

"and their families dying by the road-side," which you emphatically answered "Yes!" But I declare upon my honour as a gentleman, that I do not recollect, nor, in the desultory and somewhat loud conversation which took place at the enunciation of such a doctrine, did I hear the expression of the words of qualification which you affirm that you added at the same time, viz. "But that extremity can never happen, for on the refusal of parish relief, wages would immediately rise, and if they did not do so immediately, private charity would step in to prevent so dreadful a catastrophe." I affirm, sir, and I repeat it most solemnly, that I did not recollect or know when I wrote my "Inquiry," that these words had been used by you at Blandford; nor do I bring them to my recollection at this moment; and, therefore, I feel that, as I have acted wilfully in omitting them, I am not deserving of the censure and insinuation conveyed by you in the following words: "these, sir, were the words of Mr. Okeden. To quote the latter portion of them did not, I presume, suit the object of your Inquiry: proceeding as they do from you, sir, who are pleased to deprecate in this very letter of yours, the bitterness of personal invective!" Upon due inquiry, however, at a conference holden this day between my most highly respected friends Sir John Smith, Bart., Thomas Harriet Bastard, Esq., and myself, who were present at the special meeting aforesaid, at Blandford, I find for the first time, that the words of qualification alluded to by you, or words to that effect, were added by you, after the promulgation of the extraordinary and unchristian doctrine so loudly reprobated by me, and by others who were present on that occasion: and I therefore not only lament that I could not charge my memory with these words, when I quoted the declaration of yours which was precedent to them, but I proceed to show that if I had quoted these qualifying terms, they would have been utterly insufficient (as maintained by my hon. friend, Sir John Smith, at the time,) to exempt the doctrine of refusing relief to meritorious able-bodied labourers, from the censures which are due to such a system of policy, and which I attached to it in my "Inquiry." As amended and corrected by you, your declaration stands as follows:— I was asked by Sir John Smith, or yourself, I forget which, whether I was prepared, then, to see the men and their families die by the road. I answered—that question is somewhat difficult to reply to; I say yes,—but that extremity never can happen, for on the refusal of parish relief, wages would immediately rise, and if they did not do so immediately, private charity would step in to prevent so dreadful a catastrophe." Now how is the matter altered, modified, and amended by the addition of these qualifying words? Here is the doctrine promulgated, as stated by me in my "Inquiry," page 11, that no relief whatever ought to be afforded to the able-bodied man, and that if he and

"his family could not subsist upon their wages, they might lie down and die by the road side"—with only the *mere contingency* of a probable rise of wages, or of the casual application of the cold hand of charity to save them from destruction! Is there a reasonable, or an impartial man alive, that will say the two propositions are not absolutely the same in their essence and true meaning; and that even if these qualifying words were suppressed, the effect of the doctrine advocated by you, sir, would not be the same. But let us look a little closely at these alternative measures in store for the starving paupers of England, when the poor-laws shall be abolished. First, as to a rise of wages. In parishes where the population exceeds the demand for labour, such an increase of wages could not take place, from the nature of things, without a decrease of capital; being the very evil which this poor-law relief, if continued, would occasion, and to prevent which, this relief is proposed to be discontinued. Nor would the rate-payers of this kingdom be more willing to accede to an advance of wages, than to submit to the payment of poor-rate to the able-bodied pauper. I have, in addition to personal experience, the authority of Dr. Smith, for saying (*Wealth of Nations*, chapter 8,) "masters are always and every where in a sort of tacit, but constant and uniform combination, not to raise the wages of labour above their actual rate." "The demand for those who live by wages, it is evident, cannot increase but in proportion to the increase of the funds which are destined for the payment of wages. The demand for those who live by wages, therefore, necessarily increases with the increase of revenue and stock of every country, and cannot possibly increase without it. The increase of revenue and stock is the increase of national wealth. The demand for those who live by wages, therefore, naturally increases with the increase of national wealth, and cannot possibly increase without it. It is not the actual greatness of national wealth, but its continual increase, which occasions a rise in the wages of labour." Let us apply the solid reasoning of Dr. Smith to the case before us. You affirm, sir, that if relief was withheld from able-bodied men, that "wages would immediately rise." Now granted that the agriculturist and manufacturer would be inclined to give high wages, it is certain that an increased amount of wages can only be afforded when "there is an increase of the funds which are destined for the payment of wages;" in other words, when *profits are great*: so that in times of depression and distress—the very period when these able-bodied paupers would stand in need of these high wages, they would absolutely and universally fail them. But Dr. Smith also declares, what common and every-day experience confirms, "That the demand for those who live by wages, naturally increases with the increase of national wealth, and cannot pos-

"sibly increase without it;" so that in cases of national distress, bad harvests, manufacture depression, or during the pressure of occasional calamity and depreciation of property, arising from any other cause, it is certain, not merely as shown above, that wages would decrease, but that the demand for labourers would decrease also, and that thousands and tens of thousands would be thrown absolutely out of employ; and, in that case, relief to able-bodied men having been prohibited by law as proposed by you at the Easter sessions of 1831, what other alternative remains to the wretched labourer of England, but to "lie down and die by the road side?" But there is another point of view, in which your expected and promised rise of wages cannot take place, and therefore cannot compensate for a loss of the poor-law system of relief. I have hitherto supposed that the supply of labour is only equal to the demand. What, sir, let me ask, are we to do in parishes such as Sturminster and Stalbridge for instance, where there are fifty and even seventy able-bodied men out of employ at one time, and that for a period of eight months and more every year. How are the wages of these men to be raised? Let Dr Malthus—the sheet-anchor of that abstract principle which has led you into the labyrinths of so much error; let Dr. Malthus answer: "A market over-stocked with labour, and an ample remuneration to each labourer, are objects perfectly incompatible with each other. In the annals of the world they never existed together: and to couple them, even in imagination, betrays a gross ignorance of the simplest principles of political economy." But there is another point of view in which it becomes every advocate for the abolition of relief to able-bodied men, to look at the doctrine of high wages in lieu of such relief, in order to see the utter insufficiency of such a remedy, and the necessity which, as a consequence must exist, of having such a provision as that of the poor-laws to fall back upon, in cases of extreme distress, in order to protect the labouring population of this country from absolute starvation. Let us suppose, sir, the too frequent contingency of a scarcity in this country, approaching to famine; and let us see how your presumed substitute of high wages would work in that case, in preference to the poor-law system of relief as existing at present: and let me ground this wholesome and cautious view of the certain evils which would ensue to society, if your plans were carried into effect, not upon any insufficient and valueless opinions of my own, but on the authority of Dr. Malthus—an authority that you, I am most truly confident, will never attempt to call in question.

"If," says Dr. Malthus, when speaking of the effects produced upon society by the operation of scarcities and bad seasons,—"If, instead of giving the temporary assistance of parish allowances, which might be withdrawn on the first fall of prices, we had

"raised universally the wages of labour, it is evident that the obstacles to the diminution of the circulation, and to returning cheapness would have been still further increased; and the high price of labour would have become permanent, without any advantage whatever to the labourer." "Dr. Smith has clearly shown that the natural tendency of a year of scarcity, is either to throw a number of labourers out of employment, or to oblige them to work for less than they did before, from the inability of masters to employ the same number at the same price. The raising of the price of wages tends necessarily to throw more out of employment, and completely to prevent the good effects, which, he says, sometimes arise from a year of moderate scarcity, that of making the lower classes of people do more work, and become more careful and industrious." (Dr. Malthus, vol. ii. chap. 5.) Thus it appears that under no possible circumstances of distress, proceeding from scarcity and high prices of provisions would your plan of high wages afford relief to the distressed and starving and able-bodied pauper, even if employed; first, because the rise of wages would only be *nominal*, inasmuch as it would not keep pace with the increased price of consumable articles: secondly, because, in years of scarcity, wages would, and must, from *necessity*, be lowered, because masters, from a decrease of profit, would be unable to afford the same amount of wages, as in years of plenty and profusion; thirdly, because from a decrease of capital, they would be obliged not only to lower the amount of wages, but to throw out of employment, in many parishes, even those whom they had previously hired and paid; and when the able-bodied pauper and his family are thus reduced to poverty and distress, and when the poor-law system of relief to able-bodied men shall have been abolished and utterly put an end to—I leave you, sir, and others, to decide, what are the effects upon society at large, which are likely to result from the notable scheme of non-relief, which you have thus been pleased to advocate.

But, sir, there is another contingency that must not be lost sight of; there is another cause of national distress that too frequently takes place, and under the influence and operation of which the pauper population of this country is reduced to the lowest possible state of degradation and distress; and that is, when, from either internal or external causes, a depreciation takes place in the currency of any kingdom; and it is a curious circumstance connected with the object of our present inquiry, that the *discovery of America*, and the consequent depreciation in the value of the precious metals has been supposed by many writers on this subject to have been the more immediate cause of the introduction of the poor-laws into this country, rather than the dissolution of the monasteries at and subsequent to the reformation; and the more so, because in other Catholic countries, in Spain espe-

ally, where no monasteries were suppressed, regulations for the maintenance of the poor became necessary about the same period. "A depreciation of money, (says Dr. Rees,) has the same effect on the circumstances of the labourer as a bad harvest. Commodities rise in price, and if the change in the value of money is progressive for a number of years, he suffers the same hardships as from a succession of bad seasons, which every year becomes worse and worse. While money continues to sink, the labourer, though occasionally relieved by an advance of wages, feels himself exposed, in a few years, to the recurrence of the same difficulties. In a few years he will be reduced to indigence: and from indigence to beggary, the transition is short. That this was the case in England during the sixteenth century; that the number of the poor was continually increasing; that the country was overrun with idlers and vagrants, we have the authority of the poor-laws to prove, and the concurrent testimony of all contemporary authors to corroborate." I have a right to infer then, and to assert, that your proposed panacea of an increase of wages, in lieu of poor-law relief, will utterly and entirely fail to cure the national evils which the abolition of that relief would occasion. You have adduced no reason or argument, sir, of any kind or sort whatever, to prove that "on the refusal of parish relief, wages would immediately rise;" and I show upon authority, which will not, and cannot be questioned,—first, that wages cannot rise, when "the funds which are destined for the payment of wages" are either stationary or declining: secondly, have shown that wages cannot rise, when the demand for those who "live by wages" is decreasing instead of otherwise: thirdly, I have proved, that in the event of a scarcity approaching to famine, the effect of such a visitation would be either to "throw a number of labourers out of employment, or to oblige them to work for less than they did before;" and lastly, I have also proved that in cases where the standard of value becomes reduced, and "a depreciation of money" takes place as well, "the same effect on the circumstances of the labourer" takes place, as in the event of a bad harvest, thereby reducing the paupers of this country to the very extremity of national distress; and having shown all this, I must leave yourself and others to decide whether abstract principles without experience, and theory without practice, are likely to help them in their misfortunes; and whether anything but a servile war can be expected to ensue, as the consequences of so rash, and so unchristian a scheme as that of the abolition of relief to able-bodied paupers who would be reduced, with their innocent children, to a state of absolute starvation—not by any act of improvidence or immorality of theirs, but by the influence and effect of causes over which neither they themselves, nor the rulers of the destinies of nations can, by

possibility, possess even the slightest control.

But you tell us, sir, that there is one resource left, "private charity would step in to prevent so dreadful a catastrophe." Now granted that the bed-ridden would be visited, that the idiotic would be attended to, and his wants anticipated; and that a person would be found, clothed with the official power and responsibility of stimulating the humane, and of giving a current and direction to their munificence: who would hold up the widow's cruise that it might always be replenished, and the poor man's barrel of meal that it might not fail; and that shivering want might catch the crumbs which prodigality or mercy has to spare,—let me ask, if such ministers of goodness are to be found within the crowded city, attended upon the chariot wheels of the rich and the luxurious, tell me, sir, I beseech you where such an individual is to be found within the precincts of the deserted village? and who are to be the votive offerers of the bounty thus required, in those lonely dwellings of despair and destitution? I need not inform a gentleman, who is so well read in the history of his country as yourself, that at and subsequent to the period of the reformation, such persons were appointed by law at a very early period of our history, at a time too, when "private charity" was known to be most exuberant, for the express purpose of collecting "voluntary alms," for the support of the poor of this realm, and that such "voluntary alms," and charitable contributions on the part of individuals, was quite insufficient for the purpose.

By the 27. of Henry VIII. chapter 25, the several hundreds, towns corporate, parishes or hamlets, were required to "find and keep "every aged, poor, and impotent person, "which was born or dwelt three years in the same limit, by way of voluntary and charitable alms in every of the same cities and parishes, with such convenient alms as shall be thought meet by their discretion, so as none of them shall be compelled to go openly in begging;" and the minister was to take all opportunities to exhort and stir up the people to be liberal and bountiful.

By the 1. of Edward VI. chapter 3. after providing most severe punishments (by branding with a hot iron and by perpetual slavery) for the vagabonds and those who "lived idle and loiteringly by the space of three days" it was also enacted that "all impotent, maimed and aged persons, who cannot be taken for vagabonds, shall have convenient houses provided for them, and otherwise be relieved in the cities, boroughs, or towns, where they were born, or where most conversant by the space of three years, by the willing and charitable disposition of the parishioners."

By the 5. and 6. of Edward VI. chapter 2. collectors of the poor were to take down in writing on a certain Sunday, immediately after divine service, in every year, an account of

what every person was willing to give weekly for the ensuing year: and if any should refuse to give, the minister was gently to exhort him, and in case of refusal, to report him as a recusant to the bishop.

By the 5. of Elizabeth, chapter 3, if he stood out against the bishop's exhortation, the bishop was to certify the same to the justices in sessions; who had a power,—first, to persuade him to contribute—secondly, “to assess him what they think reasonable towards the relief of the poor,” and in case of refusal to commit him till such assessment was paid.

But the question is, how did this system work? what was the result of an appeal to the “private charity” of individuals—and of whole parishes, stimulated as it was when slumbering and inert, by the exhortations of ecclesiastical persons, ministers, and bishops, and excited as it also was by the pains and penalties of the statute law through the agency of her Majesty's justices of the peace in quarter-sessions assembled, who were invested with the powers of commitment, until the parties who were recusant consented to contribute their “*voluntary alms*” towards the relief of the poor? The answer is, as it would be again, were some insufficient modes of provision for the poor, even for the “im-potent, maimed, and aged persons” in distress, had recourse to;—the answer is, that it *totally failed* (as the gradually increasing severity of these statutes would have long since prepared us to expect); and the 14. of Elizabeth, c. 3, was expressly enacted for the purpose of enabling her Majesty's justices of the peace to make “a general assessment of the parishioners of every parish for the relief of the poor of the same parish,” and for introducing that principle of *compulsory assessment*, which the subsequent statutes have embodied under certain improved regulations—and which constitutes the principle of *parochial provision for the poor* down to this hour.

In the sad spirit of prophetic apprehension it was then, touching the results which must inevitably follow, if the legislature in an evil hour should be induced to adopt and act upon the fatal doctrines of non-relief advocated by you at Blandford, and looking with the experienced eye of a well-read magistrate of forty years standing, to the effects which must irresistibly be produced upon the population of this country, too well informed in these days, both as to the nature and extent of their civil and social rights, and too well acquainted with the extent of the physical power which they possess also, to enforce them—that my highly esteemed friend, Sir John Smith (by whose side I am proud to be found standing as the “poor man's friend,” on principles both of religion, and equity, and expediency, such as cannot be controverted), I say that to his everlasting honour both as a magistrate and a Christian, Sir John Smith declared at Blandford upon the promulgation of your opinions,

“Rather than assent to such a doctrine, or see my fellow subjects reduced to such distress as must ensue from its adoption, without being enabled in a Christian country, to afford the due relief, I would throw up my commission as a magistrate, and act no longer.”

I have a right then, from the arguments thus used, to declare and affirm that *private charity*, which was had recourse to and tried from the year 1535 to 1572, a period of no less than *thirty-seven* years, is utterly insufficient as a substitute for the present system of *compulsory relief*, even to the “im-potent, maimed, and aged” paupers of the kingdom: and as I have previously shown that your other alternative of an *expected and presumed rise of wages*, “on the refusal of parish relief” never could, under any circumstances, be held to be an equivalent for that necessary provision for the poor, I affirm, sir, that we are now standing in the exact position in which we were, prior to the introduction of those redeeming words of qualification on which you appear in your letter to me to lay so much stress and importance; that the question is not at all affected in any way whatever, practically, by the introduction of those words of qualification, and that the effect of your doctrine, if ever it should unfortunately be adopted, would be, and must be, to compel the able-bodied paupers of this kingdom, who cannot get adequate wages, or who are out of employ, to “*Lie down and die by the road side*,” unless they should be driven, as Lord Chief Justice Hale conceived they would be, under the self-same circumstance, **TO BEG OR STEAL FOR THE MEANS OF THEIR SUBSISTENCE.**

You next observe, “Now had you waited, as in common fairness you ought, for the publication of my entire Report, as it will appear before the House of Commons, you would have seen that, so far from advocating what you term ‘an extraordinary and unchristian doctrine,’ I deprecate, as an act of barbarity and injustice, the refusal of relief to able-bodied men in employ, until the sufficiency of labourers created by the present vicious system of the scale and make-up, be disposed of, either in this country, or in the colonies.”

To this sentence of your letter, sir, I really scarcely know what reply to advance. Do you seriously propose, sir, in the first place, that a report reflecting upon our conduct as magistrates, is to be circulated throughout the kingdom (containing most serious charges against us, as your report of the date of the 25. of December last undoubtedly does), and that we, the parties accused, are to sit down and say nothing in our defence—nothing in extenuation of, or in disproof of, the charges and insinuations which are thus publicly recorded against our conduct and our practice? Are we to wait till your “entire report” is laid upon the table of the House of Commons, accompanied for aught we know, by strictures upon

our conduct on the part of the central poor-law commissioners themselves; and who, from our very silence on these matters, would have a right to infer that we were guilty of the charges which the assistant commissioner had alleged against us in the extracts of his report, "published by authority," and the more so, because our waiting for the presentation of your "entire report" at the table of the House of Commons, would have appeared to be the more extraordinary and remiss on our part, with a view to self-justification, when it is considered that in the extracts from that report now "published by authority," you declared distinctly, on the 25. of December last, "I have ALREADY named in my report 'on Dorsetshire, the district of Sturminster Newton, as the worst regulated as to poor concerns, with the highest proportionate rates in the county; it is certain that in no district is there so much magisterial interference;'" a sentence where magisterial interference, bad regulation, and high poor-rates are spoken of conjunctively; a condemnation, therefore, at once absolute and complete; and from which no appeal was afforded to the magistrates of this division, but through the medium of that inquiry which we have instituted into the merits of that report!

But I confess that I am surprised, though delighted, to find that in this "entire report" you deprecate as "an act of barbarity and injustice, the refusal of relief to able-bodied men in employ, until the superfluity of labourers, created by the vicious system of the scale and make-up be disposed of, either in this country or in her colonies;" knowing as I do, that your doctrine at Blandford, above alluded to, as well as at the Easter sessions of 1831, when you moved absolutely and unconditionally—"That it was impolitic and illegal to make up the wages of able-bodied men from the poor-rate," was diametrically opposed to this new principle, as now for the first time promulgated as your doctrine on this subject; and lamenting as I do that when you found fault with us for making "orders on the overseers of Hasilbury Bryan, requiring them to relieve ten families, all able-bodied, and in employ," (and this at the expense to the parish of less than sixpence and a farthing per head, exclusive of their wages,) you did not inform His Majesty's poor-law commissioners and the public, that we had simply acted in conformity with your own new opinion thus expressed, knowing also, as I do, that no steps had been taken at that time, or were about to be taken with view of disposing, "either in this country or her colonies, of the superfluity of labourers" which were then requiring such relief. You do state that when you moved, at the Easter sessions of 1831, "that it is illegal and impolitic to make up the wages of able-bodied men from the poor-rate," you withdrew your motion "upon the suggestion of Mr. Banks, that the period of enforcing it

"would so immediately follow the agricultural riots, that considerable fresh excitement might ensue." I well remember, and indeed shall never forget the luminous, eloquent, and argumentative address delivered by that honourable and highly respectable individual upon that memorable occasion; but permit me to say, sir, that if you were so far convinced by the prudent suggestions of Mr. Banks, as to believe, and to admit, that it would have tended to "fresh excitement," if relief to the able-bodied in general had been withheld immediately "after the riots," you ought also, "in fairness," to have justified our conduct as justices of the Sturminster division, for having acted up to this very doctrine, according to your own views and conceptions, when we granted the relief to the aforesaid ten paupers of Hasilbury Bryan "soon after the riots" in the year 1830. You go on to observe, with regard to the manner in which the evidence was recorded by you at Sturminster, "You must surely, sir, recollect, you cannot possibly have forgotten, that previous to the sitting at Sturminster, I wrote to you, and in the strongest terms, requested your special assistance and co-operation," &c.

I well remember having been honoured by such a letter from you, requesting the presence of myself and brother justices at Sturminster, and desiring us to summon the overseers of our whole division to be present at the same time and place, then and there to give such evidence and information, &c., as you might require. I did not complain of our being ignorant of the day of meeting on this occasion, but I do complain that you never sent to require or request our presence in the room, where, as it turns out, you were recording evidence and charges against us deeply affecting and involving our character: and I do complain that after these charges had been preferred and recorded, and after our practice and the purity of our motives had been assailed by some malicious slanderer, upon grounds which you yourself, sir, must now admit to have been untrue; I complain, and my brother justices complain, that when you returned into our room (where we were still engaged laboriously in petty session), and continued to be so for nearly three hours after you had disposed of the whole twenty parishes within our division, and had left the town of Sturminster,) you did not inform us at that moment, or at all, that you had received such charges and complaints against us; that in your opinion our system was irregular; that our "district was the worst regulated as to poor concerns with the highest proportionate rates in the county," and that we had done all in our power to thwart and counteract the highly respectable rector of the parish of Hasilbury Bryan, from motives, which, if true, ought to lead to the erasure of our names from the commission of the peace, and to the execration of every man of honour and integrity within the united kingdom. Instead of this—instead of giving us an opportunity of de-

sending ourselves, if we could do so, from charges and complaints thus preferred behind our back—instead of sending for us into the adjoining room where you were sitting, and giving us an opportunity of meeting our calumniators and of disproving, as I trust we have disproved, the erroneous statements which they made, you are aware, sir, that on your returning into the room, you merely wished us a good morning, and shook us by the hand, and that from the 29. day of October last till the latter end of April, 1833, when we saw your report for the first time in our lives, as "published by authority," we had no conception that a single charge, or complaint of any sort or kind had been alleged against us on that day.

The only other part of your letter that requires additional comment from me, are the words which follow, "I cannot conclude my letter without protesting against your "insinuation, that I wish to depreciate the provincial magistrates of England." I can only say that when I find it alleged in one part of your report, that you "do not hesitate to pronounce a decided opinion that the poor of boroughs, where little or no magisterial interference takes place, are superior in moral character and appearance to the majority of country parishes," where, of course, it does take place; and when I see such sweeping censures on division magistrates in another part of it, made, as they have been in our case, without the least foundation for them, I cannot conceive that any great desire could exist on the part of the person making those statements, to elevate the provincial magistracy to the level which they are entitled to. I will not, however, having declared already in the first edition of my "Inquiry," "that I believe the errors and misapprehensions of Mr. Okeden to have been perfectly unintentional and inadvertent on his part;" having thus given a proof of my desire to do justice to the motives which actuated your mind when you drew up the report complained of by myself and my brother justices of this division,—I will not depart from a principle so generous and correct, and I will therefore again declare, that if, in the expression of these opinions, or any others which I have hazarded during this painful inquiry, you conceive that I have departed from that spirit of liberality and good feeling which it becomes me to maintain and to express upon all occasions, I am ready to express my sorrow and regret at having so acted, unconscious as I am of even of intending so to do, *my sole object* having been, not to invade the character, to misrepresent the motives, or misstate the opinions and practice of other persons, but simply with a view to our own individual characters, to defend and to protect ourselves; especially so, when considering ourselves as a part and parcel of the

magistracy of Great Britain, whose character and influence through us we consider to have been assailed.

I have the honour to be, sir,
your most obedient humble servant,
HARRY FARR YEATMAN.

MOST CURIOUS!

I TAKE the following from a New-York paper, called the *Morning Courier and New-York Advertiser*, dated, New York, Thursday, 20. June, 1833. There is, it seems, a CANAL-JOB going on in Pennsylvania; that it is carried on by the means of money, raised in shares, as the gambling devils call it. The "property" consists of what they call "stock." In short, it is a STATE-DEBT; a piece of "NATIONAL FAITH;" and "faith" it is of a very frail nature! However, the main thing that I have in view, at this time, is to give a list of the names of foreigners, who are the "public creditors" of the State of Pennsylvania, as relating to this "CANAL." I dare say, that the canal itself is a mere job; a piece of pure plunder; and that, at last, the swindle will wind up with a "stop-law;" that is to say, with a payment in paper-money, worth, perhaps, a shilling in the pound. The jobbers are bad enough *here*; but then, what are they then? The vile and profligate principle of stock gambling has, *here*, to struggle against hereditary and traditional integrity; against that undefinable uprightness of character, which was attempted to be described in the old saying, that such a man's "WORD" was his "BOND;" and which character, though greatly faded by the devil's works of funds and stocks, is not yet wholly lost. But, *there!* why, the gambling villains would laugh in your face, if you were only to hint at being under the influence of any thing but *gain*. No set of sharks, assembled round a gaming-table, were ever more destitute of honesty. However, my present business is to give a list of the foreigners who are creditors in this canal; hoping, and *firmly believing*, that they never will see one single

nothing of their money; and this list is as follows:

PENNSYLVANIA CANAL DEBT.

A very curious document has been published in the *Harrisburgh Telegraph*, giving the names and amount of stock held by foreigners in that state debt.

The whole amount held by foreigners is 9,301,712 dollars, out of 10,463,661 dollars, or upwards of one-half of the whole. Among the curious list we notice the following:—

| | Dollars. Cents. |
|--|-----------------|
| His Royal Highness Charles, Sovereign Duke of Brunswick | 52,500 — |
| The most Hon. Francis Seymour Conway, Marquis of Hertford | 21,200 — |
| John Marshall, of Leeds | 38,700 — |
| Ditto | 23,600 — |
| Sir Charles Richard Blunt, of Heathfield Park, Sussex | 20,000 — |
| Count de Erceville, of Paris | 7,500 — |
| R. I. Thompson, of Kirby Hall, Yorkshire | 26,609 93 |
| Admiral Fellows, of Portman-square, London | 12,000 — |
| Mr. Henry Fellows, of Ramsay Abbey, Huntingdonshire | 25,000 — |
| Wilhelmina Philippina Van Tuyl Van Scrooskerken, of Amsterdam | — — — |
| Right Hon. Sir W. Alexander, of London | 17,500 — |
| Samuel Gurney, of London | 25,000 — |
| John Hey Punget, of Totteridge, England | 18,878 47 |
| W. Sheepshanks, of Leeds | 7,604 70 |
| Claude George Thornton, of Hertfordshire | 14,000 — |
| Abel Tucker, of St. Thomas | 20,000 — |
| Louis Albert de Brancas, Duke of Cereste | 5,000 — |
| Adome Louisa Paulina de Chastellux, Countess de Dantas, of Paris | 32,900 — |
| Major General John Maitter, of Warwick, England | 91,000 — |
| the Hon. Anne Rushout, of Wanstead, Essex, Co. | 20,000 — |

| | Dollars. Cents. |
|---|-----------------|
| Andrew Service of London | 32,353 56 |
| Alexander Saunderson of Castle Saunderson, Co. Cavan, Ireland | 20,000 — |
| Emanuel Victor Murray de l'Auberredizere de Quinson, of Paris | 20,000 — |
| Gowan and Mera, of London | 97,400 — |
| Josefa Espenosia de Cuesto, of Mexico | 8,088 67 |
| Thomas Cotterell, of Birmingham, England | 17,615 38 |
| Wm. Death, of Hensalen, Herts Co. | 24,000 — |
| Pierre Maria Dit Duriex, of South Wales | 6,581 41 |
| Wm. John Hurry, of Great Yarmouth | 6,480 26 |
| Richard Bolus Hall, of Wye | 21,600 — |
| John Hall, of do | 16,800 — |
| John Bacon Sawny Morrit, of Rokeby Park, Yorkshire | 24,000 — |
| Mrs. Anne Redfern, of Birmingham | 25,653 23 |
| Helene Francove Ferte | |
| Guillaume Favre, of Geneva, Anne Selona Farmer, and Lient.-Col. Wm. Fawcett, of Bath, England | 25,000 — |
| Johannes De Veer and Philip Disk Thompson Milton Spiri, of St. Eustatia | 15,000 — |
| Charles Louis Count Vongere, of France | 45,000 — |
| Robert Peel, Esq., of Park Crescent, Portland Place, London | 20,000 — |
| Philip Louis de Peyronnet Baron de St. Marce | 6,700 — |

The whole is a very amusing document; some of the names are in the highest degree unique and odd, worthy a place in a new dictionary of proper names.

From the LONDON GAZETTE,

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 1833.

BANKRUPTS.

BURROWS, J., Camberwell-green, bookseller.
 DAVIES, J., Liverpool, painter.
 DAVIS, S. G., Lower Milton, Worcestershire, cattle-dealer.
 HAYTREAD, J., Silsoe, Bedfordshire, inn-keeper.
 NOTLEY, S., Cornhill, and Compton-street-east, chocolate-manufacturer.
 RAWLINGS, E., Bexley, Kent, tanner.
 ROBINSON, I., Doncaster, dealer.
 WIGELSWORTH, J., Skelbrook, Yorkshire, innkeeper.

SCOTCH SEQUESTRATION.

MACBRAYNE, R., Summerlee, near Airdrie, coal-master.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 1833.

BANKRUPTS.

ATKINSON, H., Newcastle-upon-Tyne, iron-monger.
 BOND, J. B., and J. Plowright, Great Surrey-street, linen-drapers.
 DENT, J., Durham, draper.
 FREEMAN, W., Edgware-road, plumber.
 GREEN, J., Colchester, tailor.
 GUNNER, J., Great James-street, Bedford-row, money-scrivener.
 LATCHFORD, J., Piccadilly, bit and spur-maker.
 PIGOTT, G., Ranby, Nottinghamshire, corn-factor.
 RANGER, J., Newark-upon-Trent, Nottinghamshire, linen-draper.
 SMITH, J., Liverpool, ship-builder.
 SUTCLIFFE, R., Butterworth-hall, Lancashire, shopkeeper.
 WRATHER, J., jun., Ripon, Yorkshire, inn-keeper.

SCOTCH SEQUESTRATIONS.

ADAMSON, G., Dumfries, draper.
 ANDERSON, J., jun., Aberdeen, general-merchant.
 SPEARS, T., Kirkaldy, distiller.
 THOMSON, J., Gorbals of Glasgow, cotton-spinner.

LONDON MARKETS.

MARK-LANE, CORN-EXCHANGE, Aug. 5.—The supplies of Wheat from the home counties proved limited to this day's market, but the samples left over from the previous week caused the staves to be well filled. The millers purchasing more freely, the better descriptions moved off hand on rather improved

terms as compared with Friday, making the currency about 1s. to 2s. lower than this day's night. Fine Essex runs obtained 6s. Some new samples of Wheat were exhibited, their quality was much inferior to the first show of last season, being thin and shabby, and appeared to have been cut green; one sample only was good. The prices ranged from 56s. to 63s. Although these specimens of the new crop are no just criterion of the general produce we have to anticipate, yet they indicate the probability of considerable inequality existing in the yield of this as well as the preceding season. In bonded Corn nothing doing.

Barley was in short supply. The article meets little attention, and prices of grading qualities were nominally unaltered.

Malt dull at the former quotations.

The receipt of Oats was limited; good fresh feed met a fair demand at rather better prices than this day week.

Beans saleable at a reduction of 1s. per qr. on the previous rates.

Peas of all descriptions 1s. to 2s. per qr. cheaper; and new boilers in some instances 3s. to 4s. lower than last Monday.

Flour dull, the top quotations varying from 50s. to 52s.

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Wheat | 58s. to 63s. |
| Rye | 30s. to 32s. |
| Barley | 24s. to 26s. |
| — fine | 26s. to 30s. |
| Peas, White | 31s. to 34s. |
| — Boilers | 40s. to 48s. |
| — Grey | 30s. to 35s. |
| Beans, Small | —s. to —s. |
| — Tick | 30s. to 32s. |
| Oats, Potato | 23s. to 26s. |
| — Feed | 16s. to 21s. |
| Flour, per sack | 50s. to 52s. |

PROVISIONS.

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Pork, India, new | —s. to 110s. |
| — Mess, new | —s. to 60s. per barl. |
| Butter, Belfast | —s. to —s. per cwt. |
| — Carlow | —s. to —s. |
| — Cork | 72s. to 73s. |
| — Limerick | 72s. to 74s. |
| — Waterford | 70s. to 73s. |
| — Dublin | —s. to —s. |

SMITHFIELD, August 5.

This day's supply of Beasts was, for the time of year, rather numerous, but in great part of middling and inferior quality; the supply of Sheep and Lambs was moderately good; of fat Calves and Porkers rather limited. Trade was with each kind of prime meat somewhat brisk, at an advance of from 2d. to 4d. per stone; with all meat of inferior quality dull, at Friday's quotations.

About a moiety of the Beasts were short-horns, chiefly from Lincolnshire, Leicesters-

shire, and Northamptonshire; the remainder about equal numbers of Scots, interspersed with a few Norfolk homebreds, Devons, Welsh cattle, Herefords, and Irish Beasts, with about 100 lusty Town's-end Cows, a few Staffords, the Scots, &c. chiefly from Norfolk, and a few from Essex, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire, the Devons, Welsh cattle, Herefords, and Irish Beasts, for the most part from our different northern, western, and midland districts: the Town's-end Cows, &c. chiefly from the London marshes.

Full three-fifths of the Sheep were new Leicesters of the South Down and white-faced crosses, in the proportion of two of the former to five of the latter; a fifth South Downs; and the remaining fifth about equal numbers of old Leicesters, polled Norfolk, and Kents, or Kentish half-breds; with a few horned Norfolks and Dorsets, horned and polled Scotch and Welsh Sheep, &c.

About four-fifths of the Lambs appeared to consist of about equal numbers of South Downs, and new Leicesters, the latter chiefly of the Downish cross; the remaining fifth of Dorsets, with a few Somersets, Kents, &c.

MARK-LANE.—Friday, August 9.

The arrivals this week are large. The market dull, at Monday's prices.

THE FUNDS.

| Per Cent. | Fri. | Sat. | Mon. | Tues. | Wed. | Thur. |
|------------|------|------|------|-------|------|-------|
| Cons. Ann. | 89 | 89 | 88 | 88 | 89 | 89 |

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